GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 1 1996

Motor Racing Belgian Grand Prix

Hill lucky to stay on course

Alan Henry at Spa

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER did his arch-rival Damon Hill a rare favour on Sunday with a gripping victory in the Belgian Grand Prix that ensured Jacques Villeneuve had to settle for second place.

The Ferrari driver's performance on this high-speed track could prove decisive if Hill were to scrape home with the world championship having allowed the momentum to pass to his Williams team-mate Villeneuve.

With Hill battling home fifth after another tactically muddled race, he could count himself lucky that he had lost only four world championship points to Villeneuve. He now has a 13-point lead with three races and 30 points on offer for the winners remaining.

"In a way it was a relief to get two points," said Hill. "I thought that Jacques might win and I was not going to get any points at all at one time but I have to admit that 13 points is not what I would call a comfortable lead in the championship."

He said he was not despondent but emphasised: "I think the team under-performed as a whole."

Villeneuve had taken an immediate lead from pole ahead of Schumacher's Ferrari, which had burst through from the second row to seize second place ahead of Hill. The Briton's problems were then compounded when David Coulthard's McLaren-Mercedes surged past into third place on the 190mph climb to the Les Combes corner.

Hill, who had taken the spare car shortly before the start, found himself battling a serious handling imbalance on his first set of tyres. But he settled down to run fourth in the opening stages, although he was steadily dropping away from the leaders.

His biggest problem arose as the drivers bunched in tight formation behind the safety car, which was deployed to slow the pack following an accident suffered by Jos Verstappen in the Footwork-Hart.

As the cars began using the opportunity to make pit-stops, a foul-up with the radio communication between Villeneuve and the pit crew meant the Canadian did not hear the instructions to come in and refuel at the end of lap 14.

He stayed out and came in the following lap, scrambling the team's refuelling plans as Hill was preparing to come in at the same time. They told Hill to stay out for another lap, but he had to dodge through the barriers in the pit entrance lane and lost time before finally coming in at the end of the next lap.

Hill was down in 11th place when he resumed with a gaggle of slower cars ahead of him. By lap 20 he was up to ninth, and up to fifth by lap 25 before dropping back to sixth after his second refuelling stop on lap 34.

Now the order was Schumacher, Villeneuve, Mika Hakkinen in the McLaren, Jean Alesi in the Benetton and Coulthard in the other McLaren ahead of Hill. He moved back to fifth when Coulthard spun off on lap 38 and remained there until the chequered flag.

In the closing stages Schumacher eased away from Villeneuve to finish with over five seconds in hand over the hard-driven Williams.

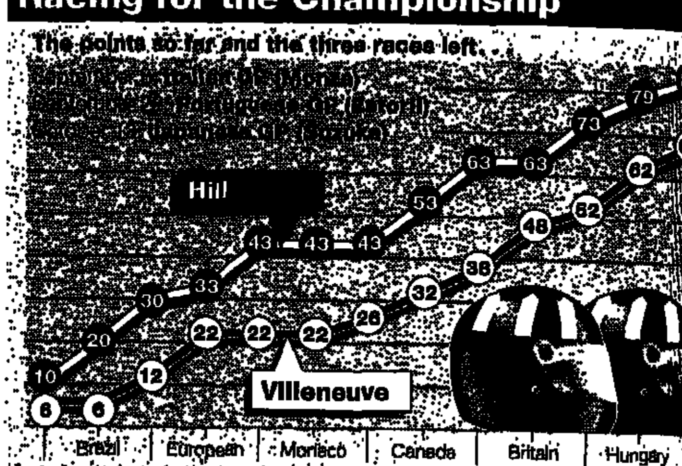
"The communication problem cost us the race," said the Williams chief designer Adrian Newey, who was in charge of race tactics. "Jacques' radio didn't work properly when the pace car came out: we called him in but he didn't hear and went past.

"By the time we saw Jacques go past it was too late to call Damon in. I had originally called him in and then said 'no' as we didn't have time to change fuel rigs and tyres."



Winning smile . . . Schumacher celebrates PHOTO: STEVE ETHERINGTON

Racing for the Championship



Villeneuve was philosophical afterwards. "We lost the race in the pit-stop," he said. "When the pace car came out we were trying to communicate but we didn't understand each other, so I stayed out.

"That was a big factor but it was a close fight with Michael. At the end I was hearing some noise from the exhaust, so I lay back a little bit, but taking four points a race off Damon is not enough."

This was one of Schumacher's finest victories, made more remarkable by a worrying degree of play in his steering after clipping a kerb.

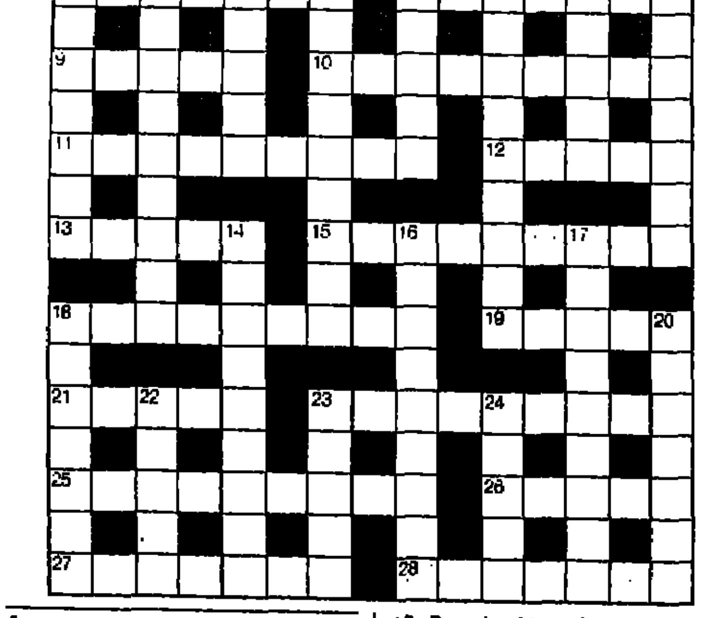
Frank Williams was impressed. "If Ferrari gets on top of its reliability problems over the winter, which it will, Michael could disappear next season," he warned.

Schumacher's victory was all the more impressive considering his crash during practice last Friday. The world champion lost control of his F310 approaching the 120mph downhill Fagnes left-hander, the car snapped into a spin and careered backwards across the gravel trap to slam into a tyre wall. The force of the impact lifted the front wheels almost a metre off the ground, and the German driver was fortunate to walk away with nothing more serious than a badly bruised right knee.

With the rear end of the car severely damaged, it was a lucky escape and lesser drivers might have been tempted to lay the blame on mechanical malfunction. But Schumacher shrugged aside the episode and admitted he had made a slight error of judgment, applying a touch too much throttle as he went to turn into the corner and losing grip.

For the Ferrari team the accident represented another painful setback. Nevertheless Jean Todt, Ferrari's sporting director, dismissed any suggestions of a crisis. "The technical situation at Ferrari appears critical," he said, "but in fact things are much better than they seem. Michael was quickest before his accident."

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria



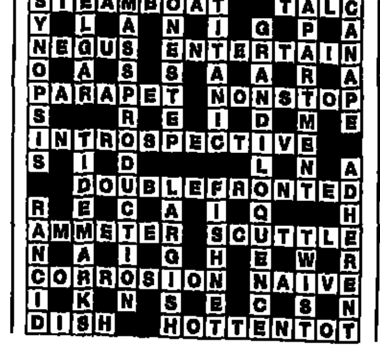
Across

1 Mail to fight with? (4-3)
5 Rainproof pudding to lay on? (7)
9 Primate builds the wall in Paris (5)
10 Mail to fight with? (6-3)
11 Quote regulations ordering something bizarre (9)
12 Monarch who must go straight? (5)
13 What sounds and what smells one goes in for! (5)
15 Sailor's inclination to pursue gold like a sponge (9)
18 Make a melodrama out of a temperance commercial featuring a nymph and a snake (9)
19 One should go shares with one's wife (5)
21 Broadcaster who might be 3 (5)
23 Wasting away? Test can be arranged (9)
25 Information in painting in a silver land (9)
26 Indication of satisfaction at honour for wizardry (5)
27 Listener at home isn't joking (7)
28 16 in the theatre (7)

Down

1 Figure of a dead parrot, as they say (7)
2 Academic gathering needed to move half immobile pussy (9)
3 24 could be inferior (5)
4 Depend, without intelligence, on sixties Egypt for case of mementos (9)
5 Bishop's joint? (5)
6 Shade of German Youth leader puncturing credibility (6-3)
7 Translation of Blume for flower (5)
8 Dance to deceive left-winger (7)
14 Sticking it out to the last, cure an ill (9)
16 Team on top of table may have a lot of cups (9)
17 Intercourse, as it were, extending 10 metres (9)
18 Unwilling guest of a lot of people for a long time (7)
20 Lady goes round at church: is she making a plot? (7)
22 Clown to the queen goes to the stake (5)
23 It is not corruption (5)
24 Bad-mouthed form of 21? (5)

Last week's solution



Rugby Union South Africa 26 New Zealand 33

All Blacks the best yet

Ian Borthwick in Pretoria

FIFTEEN-MAN rugby is one of the great clichés of the game but after New Zealand's historic win on Saturday the tired old expression has taken on a new meaning.

In beating the Springboks and thus sealing their first series victory in South Africa, the All Blacks provided the planet with a glimpse of the rugby of the future. They cannot claim the title of world champions again until 1999 but these All Blacks clearly deserve the honour of world-beaters and are, perhaps, the best team ever to leave New Zealand's shores.

The key to their superiority is the quality of their support play and the astounding ball handling and passing skills from full-back to tight-head prop. The precision of their passing, and their incomparable ability to eliminate handling errors, increases their attacking potential dramatically and has added a new dimension to the game.

This was never better demonstrated than in Jeff Wilson's first try when, after the scrum-half Justin Marshall broke 30 metres upfield, the immediate support came from the two lock forwards, steaming up on the outside. Two perfectly executed passes from Robin Brooke, then Ian Jones, and Wilson flashed over in the corner.

But surely New Zealand's best example of all-round skill, and of a prototype of rugby players of the future, must be the outstanding No 8 Zinzan Brooke. He scored a classic No 8's try in the first half, going over unopposed from a scrum five yards out, then in the same way as he had crucified England in the World Cup semi-final, he dropped a goal from 35 metres with full-time up on the clock. No other forward in international rugby would have dared attempt it but Brooke is such an accomplished all-rounder that his kick sailed elegantly over.

The only sour note of the day came when the Springbok management complained over a stiff-arm tackle by New Zealand's Sean Fitzpatrick on the opposing captain Gary Teichmann. But the South Africans will not be citing Fitzpatrick. "That would appear to be sour grapes," said Morne du Plessis, South Africa's manager.

● Wales defeated the Barbarians 31-10 in Cardiff on Saturday, but the victory left many questions unanswered as to the future development of the team. The Welsh coach Kevin Bowring commented: "We have to become more penetrative and far more ruthless in possession."

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The **Guardian**
Weekly

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US punishes Iraq for attack on Kurds

Guardian Reporters and Reuter

UNITED STATES forces fired 27 Tomahawk cruise missiles at military targets in southern Iraq on Tuesday as a warning to Baghdad to comply with Gulf war ceasefire resolutions after Iraqi tanks and troops attacked a Kurdish enclave last weekend.

"The strikes were ordered as a warning to Iraq to adhere to requirements outlined in United Nations resolutions," Rear Admiral Edward Moore, commander of US naval forces in the Gulf, said.

Giving details of "Desert Strike", which was ordered by President Clinton, Adm Moore said 13 missiles were fired from two B-52 bombers flying from Guam in the Pacific and 14 were fired from the USS Laboon guided missile destroyer and the USS Shilo cruiser in the Gulf.

President Saddam Hussein, in a defiant speech carried live on Iraqi television and radio, urged his warplanes and anti-aircraft gunners to attack US and allied planes policing air exclusion zones in the southern and northern parts of Iraq. He urged his troops to give Washington "a new lesson in the meanings which they [Americans] with their empty . . . souls do not carry".

The missile strikes on Iraqi targets brought a mixed international reaction, with strong support from Britain and Germany, concern in Moscow and Cairo, and reservations from France and Spain.

The US administration had earlier dismissed as "insignificant" reports of Iraqi withdrawals from Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq. "There is some evidence of an Iraqi redeployment, but we see no indication that they are preparing withdrawal back to their original forward positions," Mr Clinton's spokesman, Mike McCurry, said.

A fighter of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which is looking to the West for help after Iraqi troops allied with the Kurdish Democratic Party captured Irbil at the weekend PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD WAYMAN

Mr Clinton pressed ahead with the missile attack despite his difficulty in rallying a coalition for action against Iraq.

Comments from Britain, with aircraft and ships in the area, were gung-ho but nebulous, suggesting John Major would go along with whatever Mr Clinton decided — though this will be harder if an Iraqi withdrawal is confirmed.

Turkey, a Nato ally with an Islamist prime minister, said the US had yet to ask its permission to use the Incirlik airbase for anything but reconnaissance. Ankara asked the UN not to delay implementation of the Iraqi food-for-oil deal suspended on Sunday.

The Kurdish faction in control of Irbil said on Monday that its alliance with Saddam Hussein was at an end. Sami Abderrahman, a senior politburo member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), told a news conference in Salahuddin: "The situation is calm and quiet, but we're in a state of armed conflict with the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan]. There are no Iraqi forces in or around Irbil, absolutely none. It's finished from our point of view."

Denying reports of an Iraqi withdrawal, the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an umbrella opposition organisation, said there were still more than 270 tanks in the Irbil area and that the Iraqi flag was flying over Kurdish regional government buildings.

In London, Ahmed Chalabi, president of the INC executive council, said punitive action was not enough. He called for the extension of the no-fly zone to the rest of Iraq. He called for international action over INC members arrested by the Iraqi secret service.

In Washington Mr Clinton faced strong domestic pressure to show resolve and punish Iraq after the Republicans criticised his "failures of leadership".

Comment, page 12
Washington Post, page 15

EU hushed up BSE scandal for five years

Stephen Bates in Brussels

AN OFFICIAL cover-up of "mad cow disease" by the European Commission emerged in Brussels this week, overshadowing the start of an inquiry by the European Parliament into the handling of this year's beef panic.

Documents disclosed by the French newspaper Libération show that senior commission officials desperately tried to prevent publicity about BSE leaking out for five years in order to stave off consumer alarm and maintain the stability of the meat market.

The documents indicate that far from Tory Eurosceptic claims that Europe ganged up on Britain when the crisis erupted last March, the opposite is true and officials in Brussels tried to hush up the BSE epidemic to protect farmers.

Among the documents published by Libération is a letter written in March 1993 by Guy Legras, the head of the Commission's agriculture directorate.

In it Mr Legras warns of the risk of causing panic. "All discussion of BSE inevitably causes problems in the meat market. Last January we had an alarm following a programme on German television and it was only due to our prudence and discretion at that time that we avoided a panic . . . In order to maintain public confidence it is essential not to provoke a reopening of the debate."

It was suggested as early as October 1990 in a memorandum by a French official, Gilbert Castille, that the UK ought to be asked not to publish the results of its research, saying "it would be better to minimise BSE by practising disinformation".

New meat scare, page 9

Middle East cauldron bubbles dangerously

COMMENT
Martin Woollacott

THE Middle East is a region that needs constant management, care, and attention. Its capacity to slide into confrontation is unrivalled. Saddam's outrageous strike into Iraqi Kurdistan is only one of a number of recent developments suggesting that both local and outside powers are in danger of losing what control they have in the past exerted,

A new Israeli government with no plan or vision of peace has undermined the Palestinian arrangements that, inadequate though they are, took so much work to bring about, while Yasser Arafat's quasi-state is rightly accused of misgovernment and corruption. Syria, on which the United States lavished so much attention, has gone into a mode of military readiness and deep suspicion of any and all Western and Israeli suggestions. Jordan has been upset by riots which have challenged royal authority. In Turkey, a Muslim fundamentalist movement now shares power in government. The smaller Gulf states suffer various obscure troubles, while, in Saudi Arabia, a crisis of succession and of purpose afflicts the royal regime. In Iran, the half-hidden struggle between various factions may be sharpening as the end of Rafsanjani's time in power approaches.

Two causal chains link these developments. One leads back to the West Bank, and one back to Kurdistan and Iraq, and the two chains also connect with one another, as Saddam dramatically demonstrated when he attacked Israel during the Gulf war. The shifts in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Syria and Jordan are related to the failure to achieve a stable settlement in the West Bank and to Israel's refusal, under its new government, to contemplate handing over the Golan Heights.

The Netanyahu government is incapable of forward movement, makes offers that can only be refused, and seems to want to take up station at some non-existent midpoint between peace and war. It can only narrow Arafat's options, deepen his unpopularity, harden him against his own liberals, and handicap him in the contest with Hamas. But the effects go beyond the West Bank and the obvious stiffening of the Syrian position. In Jordan, the King sweetened his own peace agreement with Israel by forecasting it would lead not only to an acceptable deal for Palestinians in the West Bank but to investment and economic growth that would change the lives of Jordanians on the East Bank. Instead of the promised prosperity, Jordanians face increases in the price of bread and barley, hence the recent riots.

The Kurdish-Iraq chain affects Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and the Gulf. The permanent crisis that is Kurdistan is a critical factor in Turkish politics. Without the votes of many Turkish Kurds displaced by war, the Refah Party might not be in government. More broadly, all politics in Turkey is hostage to the Kurdish question. For Iran, as this weekend has shown, Kurdistan is a perfect theatre in which to provoke both Iraq and Turkey and to challenge the United States.

The two nodes of trouble have this in common, that they both rep-

continued on page 3

Austria	AS30	Malta	45c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.60
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P.300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

Democracy a bulwark against sham prosperity

RICHARD THOMAS (August 18) writes that democracy impedes economic prosperity, and therefore must give way. Recent events in Jordan present a concrete example of his thesis: the government has doubled the price of bread as part of a deal with the International Monetary Fund. Mr Thomas would say that the IMF agreement will bring greater economic prosperity to Jordan, yet we can be in no doubt, following the riots, that were Jordan a democracy, it would reject the bargain.

The truth is that the IMF deal will not bring economic prosperity to Jordan but only to a limited élite. The bulk of the population will suffer greater economic hardship, beginning with higher food prices. Of course democracy opposes such sham prosperity! And rightly so. If democracy and economic progress appear to conflict, the problem is not with democracy but with a false definition of prosperity.

This is not the only definitional difficulty Mr Thomas experiences. He presents a list of economic freedoms — "free markets, rule of law, strong prosperity rights and limited corruption" — none of which are freedoms. Quite the opposite; all of these are restrictions on freedom. To take one example, the existence of private property restricts the right of those who don't own a particular property to make use of it. Civilisation is the surrender of many natural rights, such as this one, in return for the benefits of living in an organised and secure society.

When society is re-organised so that it no longer provides these benefits to a significant number of people, the compromise breaks down; property rights are no longer respected but must be maintained by force. One may cite numerous examples around the world — the private armies and garrison communities in the United States, the same in Somalia.

Clifford Story,
West Ryde, NSW, Australia

HAVING read Richard Thomas's article on federal budget day in Australia, I give him wholehearted support in questioning the role of democracy in promoting prosperity. The present (conservative) government came to power partly on a promise of "no new or increased taxes", and was then faced with a very large deficit to be made good. In order to keep promises and maintain credibility, the government has chosen to cut spending in many areas, resulting in shrill cries of injustice in many quarters.

Those crying the loudest are people who have contributed the least to national wellbeing and finance. This is, of course, a predictable consequence of "one man one vote" democracy, by which too many of the electorate have large privileges with little concomitant responsibility. Even assuming that the people of a country such as Australia or England can be considered as one large extended family, in what family would it make sense to entrust the spending of its wealth to its indigent and irresponsible majority members?

What's yours is mine, and what's mine is my own — that is a legitimate attitude under such a system. So is government borrowing to maintain heavy spending, which puts enormous burdens on future generations.

The Asian "tiger" economies were not mentioned by Mr Thomas, but they are a prime example of his thesis. They find themselves obliged to pay lip service to democracy but in all cases their democracy is managed in ways which ensure that the reality is a centralised oligarchy with almost unfettered control of the nation's purse strings. They use Mr Thomas's argument to justify that situation. However, I have lived in one of them for some time, and I cannot recommend them as pleasant places to reside.

Somewhere, we need to find a better middle ground. More voting power should be given to those who take more responsibility for a nation's welfare. We have a points system for rating applications for immigration to Australia — so much for assets, so much for education, so much for age, and so on. Why not a points system for votes available to each voter? And candidates for election must have certain minimum qualifications, too, preferably as lawyers and accountants, since making laws and balancing the books are the main work of politicians.

E S Webber,
Cairns, Queensland, Australia

Better the devil you know

IT IS NOT without certain amusement that I have read about all the fuss concerning the latest Tory propaganda move, depicting Tony Blair on a poster as a demon. Indeed, the new "dirty trick" by M&C Saatchi has not only caused outrage in Britain but also helped to raise some concern in Swiss and German newspapers. It has reminded people in Europe of the ugly behaviour of some British journalists during the recent European soccer championship, when the Spanish and German teams were the target of chauvinistic smears.

It is certainly true that during the past 15 years some people on the British right have developed a habit of resorting to the lowest standards when attacking their opponents in public.

I do not believe that the Labour party has anything to worry about with regard to this poster. In the first place, it only demonstrates how afraid the Tories are of Tony Blair.

(Prof Dr) Stig Förster,
Stettlen, Switzerland

Nuclear incident hushed up

YOUR ARTICLE ("'Miracle' saved UK in nuclear accident", August 25) proved evocative. I spent summer 1965 working for the Labour party in the Bury St Edmunds constituency, which included Lakenheath. Canvassing in that village, I was told repeatedly about an accident several years earlier, when a bomber crashed at the local base. This aircraft, it was said, carried a nuclear device protected by seven sequential electronic arming locks. Six of the seven triggered in correct sequence.

Your story makes it clear that local people got this story wrong, but not by very much. Even more memorable for Lakenheath folk than the crash itself was the police-enforced evacuation of a wide swathe of East Anglia that followed.

"D" notices ensured that no information about these events reached the British people at the time; but might not some subversive oral historian now aid truth and justice by probing an incident that still lives in local memory, and tell us just what a cocktail of lies and misinformation our rulers used all those years ago to shift thousands of people from their homes in the greater interest of defending the indefensible?

Ian Carter,
Auckland, New Zealand

Don't shoot the sportsman

MANY people gain pleasure launching projectiles at distant targets. Archery, darts, golf and, to some extent, cricket are manifestations of this primitive drive. Just because I choose to launch projectiles on the range of a pistol club I do not see why this should earn me the offensive title of "gun freak" (Comment, August 25).

The current media trend of vilifying legitimate sporting shooters, and draconian restrictions on firearm ownership, will do nothing to increase public safety. First, because criminals will not comply with new gun regulations any more than they did with the old and, second, because the massacres at Dunblane and Port Arthur could have been committed without a firearm.

A look at recent records will show that the worst mass killings committed by single individuals have involved far more mundane and easier to acquire items than firearms, and have resulted in 87 dead in New York, 25 dead in Brisbane, and 168 dead in Oklahoma. Now, thanks to the folly of a totally uncensored "Internet", and irresponsible newspaper editors who publish details of how terrorists hide and assemble bombs on aircraft, anyone can construct and conceal a device capable of bringing down a 747 airliner.

It's time the politicians and journalists tackled the real problem in society, which is violence itself. Until this is eradicated, disturbed individuals will continue to commit mass murders, guns or no guns.

(Dr) Frank Appleton,
Launceston, Tasmania, Australia

Protecting an oil pipeline

YOUR report (September 1) that BP is paying $60 million to establish a "private army" to guard its sites in Colombia is incorrect. In common with other oil companies, we are required to share the cost with the Colombian government of providing military protection for oil installations, regularly attacked by leftwing guerrillas.

While we would prefer to have such protection free of charge, we recognise the high cost of guarding remote oil-fields and a pipeline network that was last year attacked 63 times. We are, therefore, happy, in order to ensure the safety and security of our workforce, to meet part of that cost.

The army units involved are completely under the control of the Colombian government and in no sense are they "BP's private army". We do not provide the army with pictures of meetings with local communities or collaborate secretly with military intelligence.

R W Newton,
Director, Corporate Affairs, British Petroleum, London

Briefly

THE report by Maggie O'Kane into child and youth prostitution and your accompanying editorial (September 1) did much to raise the profile of the issue of girls and young women who are forced to sell sex.

What seems to have been overlooked is that boys and young men are also subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation, yet rarely is this issue even discussed. If we fail to recognise that young males are also at risk, we will fail to give them the support and protection they need.

Gerard Calvert,
London

FOR the sake of the truth and objective reporting and for my confidence to be restored in your newspaper please correct the caption to the front page photograph of your issue ending August 18 stating that "police intervene as Turkish Cypriots beat a Greek Cypriot" during the clashes of August 11 (the man was Mr Anastasios Isaak who died on the spot). The UN report on the events states that the three policemen in the photograph participated in the killing.

Sebastian McTally,
Nicosia, Cyprus

WHEN events within the Home Secretary's remit go well, they are matters of policy. Ministerial interference? Nonsense. When they go wrong, of course, they are operational; it is not for him to intervene and he is not informed. The multiple daily calls and the sea of paper that sank Derek Lewis are, naturally, nothing to do with these operational matters.

Therefore, the principle is that while the Home Secretary is not consulted over developing disasters, when they have occurred he is in a position to accept bravely the responsibility for rescuing the situation.

Mike Turner,
Twickenham, Middlesex

CANADA has the antidote to NBC's xenophobic, US athletes only, coverage of the Olympics (August 11). Our fine sprinters beat their fine sprinters. American newspapers and TV are still, weeks after the Olympic finale, puzzling over our winning ways. Never before has Canada enjoyed so much publicity south of the border.

Terry Fenge,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

JOHN BIRT wants an above-inflation rise in the BBC licence fee (Gateway to the BBC's future, September 1). Yet, when it comes to the World Service, he disdains public opinion, and pleads that nanny knows best. Why exactly should I subsidise this overpaid omniscient?

(Dr) Alan Bullion,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

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Arafat may seek arbitration to keep peace deal on track

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Palestine Liberation Organisation leader, Yasser Arafat, said on Monday he was considering seeking international arbitration to resolve his steadily worsening differences with Israel. The suggestion was instantly rebuffed by a spokesman for the Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu.

In a surprise intervention, Egypt warned Israel that it had just three weeks to implement existing agreements with the Palestinians. If it did not comply, Cairo would cancel a key Middle East economic conference, scheduled for November. The stark ultimatum angered Israeli officials. Mr Netanyahu's office said it was "an unfortunate threat which can only exacerbate tensions in the region".

Mr Arafat held talks stretching into the early hours of Tuesday with an Israeli negotiator on arranging his first summit with the prime minister, PLO officials said. But in a mood of deepening crisis, pressure is mounting on Israel to make concessions and prevent the unravelling of the 1993 peace accord.

The two men were still expected to meet this week, though their negotiators remain sharply divided on how to repair the badly faltering peace process. Among the crucial outstanding issues are:

❑ The timing and extent of Israel's withdrawal of occupation forces from the flashpoint West Bank city of Hebron. The pull-back should have been completed in March but was delayed, first by a wave of Islamist suicide bombings in Israel and then by the election of the Netanyahu government.

❑ Israel's renewed drive to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Palestinians say that the expansion plans are a blatant violation of the peace accord; Israel claims the issue remains to be discussed.

❑ The firmly promised release of all remaining Palestinian women prisoners — about 25 in all — which was vetoed last year by President Ezer Weizman of Israel.

❑ The lifting of Israel's partial ban on the entry of tens of thousands of Palestinian workers. The so-called border closure has crippled the finances of the self-rule Palestinian Authority.

The Egyptian ultimatum is unlikely to wring such wide-ranging concessions from the hardline government of Mr Netanyahu. But Israeli negotiators are said to be moving towards compromise on some issues, including a significant relaxation of the restrictions on Palestinian workers — and the long-awaited first meeting of the two leaders.

For the past month Israeli and Palestinian officials have conducted discreet talks at the Tel Aviv home of Terje Larsen, the United Nations co-ordinator in the occupied territories. The new round of hush-hush diplomacy has produced contradictory signals. According to some reports, the Israelis offered cautious concessions, including an additional 10,000 entry permits for Palestinians. The PLO, the reports said, was prepared to renegotiate the terms of the ultra-sensitive Israeli redeployment in Hebron, where some 400 Jewish settlers live among 100,000 Palestinians. Another, less sanguine, version of the talks is that Mr Arafat and his aides are determined to hold Israel to every word of the commitments made by the last government.

Tension rose on Sunday when Faisal Husseini, the PLO's top official in Jerusalem, declared that the Palestinians were poised to declare an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr Husseini took his lead from a remarkable but little reported speech last week by Mr Arafat at the Balata refugee camp in the autonomous West Bank enclave of Nablus, warning that if Israel did not honour its promises under existing peace accords, the Palestinian Authority would use "means other than negotiations" — a repeat of recent threats to revive the intifada.

The rally followed a strike called by Mr Arafat last Thursday, and obeyed by an overwhelming majority of Palestinians, in protest at Israeli plans to expand Jewish settlements in the area.

Mr Netanyahu left no doubt as to where he stands on Jerusalem — the city must remain united under exclusive Israeli sovereignty. Last week he forced the Palestinian Authority to close three institutions it supports in East Jerusalem.

An increasingly desperate Arafat agreed to close the offices hoping it would be seen by the Israelis as a gesture of goodwill that would open the door for a first meeting with Netanyahu. Instead the government spat in his face by ordering the demolition of an "illegally built" youth club inside the old city of Jerusalem.



A pensive Yasser Arafat reflects on recent humiliations during a prayer meeting OSAMA SILWADI

Washington Post, page 17

France heads for autumn of discontent

Paul Webster in Paris

FACED with a repeat of the industrial unrest which rocked his government last year, the French prime minister, Alain Juppé, called his ministers together last week to draw up urgent measures to head off a wave of strikes and internal government criticism.

The franc was hit after co-ordinated warnings by trade union leaders of "a hot autumn", adding to gloom reflected in an opinion poll in the economic daily, Tribune, showing that 75 per cent of the electorate expected paralysing strikes similar to those last November and December.

Teachers were the first to announce a protest for this month or early October, but all seven leading private and public sector unions will meet on September 10 to plan repeats of last year's street demonstrations. The Communist Party leader, Robert Hue, who refused to join marches last autumn, said he would be at the forefront of all campaigns after the holiday season. Nicole Notat, the secretary-general of the Socialist-led CFDT union, who was accused of undermining worker solidarity during the public transport stoppages, said her supporters were ready for mass action.

With unemployment running higher than in most European Union states at 12.5 per cent, France is preparing to shed about 150,000 jobs in the next two months, adding to the 3.3 million out of work and making a nonsense of President Jacques Chirac's election promise to make job creation his priority.

The Socialist Party leader, Lionel Jospin, said the government faced an unprecedented crisis of confidence. Mr Jospin spoke to France's biggest opposition movement at a party conference at La Rochelle on Sunday. "This is a government elected on a lie which pursues its way in failure," he said, referring to Mr Chirac's election promises to reduce the 3.4 million unemployed. Official forecasts show that about 260,000 jobs will be lost this year and in 1997.

Mr Chirac met German chancellor Helmut Kohl in Bonn this week to reaffirm his country's commitment to a single European currency. Despite growing doubts about France's ability to meet the conditions for joining, Mr Chirac has told French ambassadors that the country's economy is fundamentally strong and will enable it to meet the 1999 currency deadline, which depends on strictly controlled government spending.

As last year, the president has distanced himself from the coming confrontation while saying he will remain loyal to his prime minister despite Mr Juppé's falling opinion poll rating. At a meeting last month at the presidential holiday residence on the Mediterranean, he told Mr Juppé it was his responsibility to bring the economic and political crises under control.

Meanwhile Mr Juppé's Gaullist predecessor, Edouard Balladur, has led calls for a shift in economic policy. He publicly appealed for more flexible economic policies in an article in Le Monde that was considered to be the joint reflection of an influential rightwing lobby determined to see Mr Juppé replaced.

Middle East cauldron

continued from page 1

resent blocked movements toward settlement. We only have to ask what the situation in Middle Eastern countries would be like if there was a democratic, federated Iraq on the one hand, and a respectable Palestinian state on the other, to see how salutary an impact that would have on the worrying situations just surveyed.

Things happen in the Middle East, as everywhere else, by accident, or because of a mainly internal evolution in a particular country. Yet it is also true that the Middle East is a place where political forces are always on the watch both for shifts in the leadership or policy of their neighbours and for any relaxation in surveillance by the outside powers which have always constituted the framework of action there. They are also on the watch for hesitation and fumbling — for signs that big plans are going wrong. Saddam may be the most ruthless opportunist, but opportunism is a Middle Eastern characteristic.

A French diplomat once described the region as like a stove top on which an array of pots and pans are constantly coming to the boil. The principal cook in this risky kitchen is, of course, the United States. It is hard to be overly severe, because Middle Eastern countries are neither colonies nor, in any full sense, clients, and they are all awkward customers. It is also true that, without the United States, neither of the two processes would probably have been set in motion. But American inattention and a lack of forceful decision-making at critical moments have certainly contributed to the current problematic scene.

The failure to overthrow Saddam in 1991 was a mistake that could have been set right if the United States and its European allies had made the right moves. Instead, they did enough to save Kurdistan but not enough to sustain it, with the result that its political movements, which run on patronage, fell to squabbling over resources in a land virtually without revenues.

It is arguable, too, that the West backed the least effective of Saddam's opponents in the broader Iraqi opposition. While direction faltered over Iraq, a similar thing was happening over Israel. The forcefulness, in a pinch, of the Bush administration which, by withholding loan guarantees, swung Israeli politics on to a new track, was not repeated by its successor.

The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, toiled to bring about a Syrian-Israeli peace. But Rabin and Peres were not pushed hard enough, while Netanyahu was allowed to get away with the claim, during the election campaign, that he was as good a guardian of the American special relationship as a Labour leader. An American thumbs-down might have lost him the election.

One of the unattractive and counter-productive aspects of American foreign policy has always been that of revenge. There is no government like that of the United States for holding a grudge. Whether or not there was a moment after the Gulf war when a limited reconciliation could have been reached with Iran is a subject of argument.

But, if there was, it was not taken, and the difficult policy of "dual containment" has been the result. This played an unfortunate part in decision-making over both Iraq and Israel. In the first case, it inhibited any decisions that might give Iran an advantage in a post-Saddam Iraq. In the second, it inhibited a hard hand on Israel, the local ally America needed against Iran.

The Middle East is large with change. Many regimes are calcified, many leaders elderly, ailing or otherwise threatened. Among these are Saddam himself, Assad in Syria, the older royals in Saudi Arabia, King Hussein, Rafsanjani in Iran. The old guard in Israel — in the shape of Rabin and Peres — is already gone. The Kemalist order in Turkey is being modified. Popular political feeling tends to focus on new and sometimes clandestine, radical, and Islamist movements.

The element of uncertainty is growing, and the blocked processes of settlement in the West Bank and Iraq add to that uncertainty. The blockage tends to encourage risk-taking, and to fragment the patchwork of deals and political arrangements that keeps an imperfect peace. The world is faltering in the face of this worrying regression.

Allied strength

The allies command a formidable array of military might in the Middle East. The US has 23,500 combat troops stationed permanently in the Gulf region. With its vast bases with pre-positioned equipment at al-Kharj, Dhahran, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait, the US could increase this number to over 100,000 within a week.

UK
Aircraft
Six Tornado fighter-bombers stationed at Incirlik. Another six at Dhahran. All equipped with anti-tank weapons, laser-guided bombs and anti-runway weapons. In all there are 70 allied aircraft at Incirlik.

US
Warships
Two aircraft carrier groups are in the area: USS Carl Vinson in the Gulf, USS Enterprise in the eastern Mediterranean. Both are armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles. Total ships: 90.
Aircraft
Each carrier has 78 strike aircraft on board, mainly F-18s and F-14s. In addition the US has some 120 warplanes permanently in the region, mainly at al-Kharj and Dhahran (60) and Incirlik and Azrak (60).
Marine amphibious assault group on the carrier groups. Tanks and armour in Kuwait.

Iraq
Army: 350,000
Tanks: 2,700
Aircraft: 316
Some 30,000 troops and 450 tanks were involved in the recent attack on the Kurdish northern region.

France
Aircraft
Five Jaguars based at Incirlik. One refuelling tanker, some 160 personnel.

Black Sea · Turkey · Incirlik · Kurdish enclave · No-fly zone · Syria · Iraq · Baghdad · Iran · Mediterranean Sea · Jordan · Azrak · Kuwait · Dhahran · The Gulf · Riyadh · al-Kharj · Egypt · Red Sea · Saudi Arabia · Allied air base · Iraqi air base · US F-15

World congress addresses spiralling child sex abuse

Jon Henley in Stockholm

THE numbers are estimates, but if they even approach the truth they are horrifying. No part of the world, from the backstreets of Latin America to the ritziest European capital, can claim to be immune.

There are 70,000 child prostitutes in Zambia, 200,000 in Thailand, 40,000 in Venezuela, 25,000 in the Dominican Republic and 500,000 in India. In America, between 100,000 and 300,000 children are sexually exploited through prostitution and pornography every year.

In eastern Europe the situation is acute: even Estonia, with a population a quarter the size of London's, employs 1,500 minors, some as young as 10, in its sex industry.

Delegates from 122 countries gathered in Stockholm last week for the first World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The research they brought with them revealed the staggering scale of child sex abuse.

"The commercial sexual exploitation of children has become a global, multi-billion-dollar industry," Carol Bellamy, executive director of Unicef, said in her opening speech to the conference.

Experts say many factors lie behind the recent global rise of child sex abuse. In some societies, the drive towards Western-style consumerism has combined, disastrously, with traditional beliefs that young children, particularly girls, are property to be traded — families simply sell their children for something they want more.

Fear of Aids increasingly leads men to seek ever younger prostitutes, in the mistaken belief that they are safer. And modern technology has made it easier for paedophiles to produce and exchange child pornography, and far more difficult for police to stop them.

The five-day congress, sponsored by the Swedish government in co-operation with Unicef and non-governmental groups, sought to increase co-operation and harmonise legislation.

Australia has led the way in extraterritorial legislation which allows its nationals to be prosecuted at home for sex crimes against children committed abroad. By contrast, Sweden is almost alone among European countries in failing to pass legislation outlawing the possession of child pornography.

During the past three years about 160 men, mainly from America, Germany, Australia, Britain, Sweden and Switzerland, have been arrested in Asia for sex offences against children. Sex tourism is no longer promoted as explicitly as it was in the 1970s and 1980s, but men seeking sex with children still go in their thousands to Asia, Latin America and, more recently, eastern Europe.

Campaigners say the travel industry must accept its share of responsibility. Some companies have taken steps to educate tourists. Indonesia's Garuda Airlines distributes a code of ethics for tourists on flights from Australia and New Zealand. The German charter airline Condor shows passengers travelling to Sri Lanka a film which includes a segment on the wretched lives of the "beach boys" who are often the target of foreign paedophiles.

A few national travel agents' associations are co-operating in campaigns: Swedish Save the Children helped tour operators to produce a warning postcard which is now inserted in all airline tickets to Asia.

But there is a limit to what they achieve in the West. Campaigners agree that pressure from Western tour operators on hotels and tourist providers is probably the only way to stop the flow of child sex tourists.

Many cite a contract that the human rights group Terre des Hommes signed with 12 tour operators in Germany, obliging them to cancel contracts with foreign hotels which allow child prostitution on their premises.

"That kind of thing works, but we need far more of it," said Lilia Arvelo de Fiol, a social worker in Venezuela. "You can't talk to local hotel owners about ethics, they don't have any."

● Taking the lead in a nationwide push to enact tougher sex-crime laws in America, California is set to pass a measure requiring "chemical castration" of repeat child molesters.

The measure mandates that any child-sex offender convicted twice be periodically injected, after release from prison, with a drug that inhibits sex drive — unless the offender voluntarily submits to surgical castration.

The Week

AFTER months of speculation, a spokesman for Nelson Mandela confirmed that the South African president has a "steady relationship" with Graca Machel, the widow of a former Mozambican president. There are no marriage plans but Mrs Machel will spend two weeks a month at the president's home.

SEVENTY-FOUR lawsuits, mostly in Chicago, have been filed against the Nation of Islam corporation and some its key officials over the past 10 years in an effort to collect about $1.9 million in claims.

Washington Post, page 17

ANOTHER 164 students were arrested as riot police in South Korea continued to storm university campuses to dismantle a nationwide radical organisation. More than 750 students have been held.

SOUTH Africa's ruling African National Congress expelled Bantu Holomisa, formerly deputy minister of environmental affairs and tourism, from the party for having accused senior colleagues of corruption.

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ZAIRE'S president, Mobutu Sese Seko, is seriously ill with prostate cancer and has undergone surgery in Switzerland, according to Swiss television.

HUTU peasants claimed that Burundian troops and Tutsi youth killed more than 70 civilians in the village of Murengeza, near the capital Bujumbura, during a search for Hutu rebels.

ATTACKERS set fire to a hostel for asylum seekers in the south-eastern German town of Schwarzenbach, injuring one resident, police said.

MUSLIM rebels and the Philippine government have formally signed a peace pact ending 24 years of war in the south. But Nur Misuari, the chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front, said that more war would be inevitable if the pact failed to produce concrete benefits for the Muslims of the southern Philippines.

THE LAST of the Cali cartel drug barons, Helmer Herrera, surrendered to the Colombian police after spending more than a year in hiding.

COLOMBIA'S 30-year guerrilla war flared up when left-wing rebels killed at least 67 soldiers and policemen in a nationwide offensive.

TO COMBAT the "white pollution" they cause, Chinese cities are to ban the use of styrofoam lunch boxes. The city of Wuhan, which lies south of Beijing, is the first to punish anyone who sells or uses them.

Lebed claims 'war is over' in Chechenia

David Hearst in Moscow

GENERAL Alexander Lebed, the Russian president's national security adviser, last week secured an agreement in principle with the rebel Chechens' chief of staff to defer consideration of the breakaway republic's political status until December 31, 2001.

After talks in a town on the Chechen-Dagestani border, Gen Lebed triumphantly declared that he has secured a political agreement which would end the 20-month war: "That's it, the war is over," he told reporters who witnessed the signing. He gave no further details about the package of documents signed jointly with General Aslan Maskhadov, a leading moderate in the rebel camp.

Chechenia's claim to independence had been the main hurdle in the way of a political settlement of a war which has cost the lives of more than 40,000 civilians and many thousands of Russian servicemen.

If Gen Lebed has, as he claimed, achieved a settlement that could pave the way for a staged Russian withdrawal from the whole of Chechenia, he will have pulled off a political coup which will enhance his chances of becoming the acknowledged heir to the Russian political throne.

However, many obstacles still lie in his path, both in Chechenia and back in Moscow. His main obstacle is the rivalry of other politicians in the Kremlin, not least the prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and Boris Yeltsin's new chief of staff, Anatoli Chubais. Gen Lebed has also clashed with the powerful minister of the interior, General Anatoli Kulikov.

There is considerable scope for this agreement to come undone, as have two previous peace agreements. Until the eleventh hour, President Yeltsin withheld his consent to the plan, refusing to meet Mr Lebed personally.



Taiwanese military policemen practise at a military base in Linkou south of Tapei. Their 16-week training schedule ended this week
PHOTOGRAPH: TAO-CHUAN YEH

Fears grow for health of jailed Nigerian

Patrick Smith

CONCERN is mounting about the health of jailed Nigerian human rights campaigner Beko Ransome-Kuti.

One of the issues discussed by Commonwealth foreign ministers at a meeting in London last week was the refusal of the Nigerian military government to give them access to jailed opposition figures such as Dr Ransome-Kuti; the presidential election winner, Moshood Abiola; and the former head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo.

Dr Ransome-Kuti, aged 56, the African representative on the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative advisory group, was given two life sentences by a secret military tribunal in July 1995. He was one of 42 Nigerians linked by security officers to an alleged coup plot against General Sani Abacha's regime. After international pressure, his sentence was cut to 15 years.

Suffering from loss of appetite and persistent night chills, Dr Ransome-Kuti's weight is about 50kg. His wrists are swollen and there are rashes on his hands and back.

Dr Ransome-Kuti is under intense psychological pressure: he is being kept in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day in his cell on death row at Katsina jail, about 1200km from his family in Lagos.

The chairman of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Richard Bourne, described the charges against him as "trumped up" and wants the Commonwealth ministers to highlight his case and those of Nigeria's other "prisoners of conscience".

A team of investigators for the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was not allowed to see Dr Ransome-Kuti or Gen Obasanjo in May, although they were allowed a brief meeting with Mr Abiola.

Dr Ransome-Kuti has played a key role in Nigeria's human rights movement. He established the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in 1989 and did much to publicise the plight of tens of thousands of Nigerians held in jail for years before their cases come to trial.

Ian Black adds: Commonwealth ministers last week failed to force the issue of a long-awaited visit to Nigeria to examine human rights abuses and democratic reform.

The meeting in London gave officials a mandate to visit Lagos, but the Nigerian foreign minister, Tom Ikimi, insisted in Abuja that the trip could not be a fact-finding mission.

Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth, and limited diplomatic and military sanctions imposed after last November's execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the human rights activist. But no one is prepared to consider an oil embargo, probably the only effective way to hit Nigeria's military regime.

Patrick Smith is Editor of Africa Confidential

Khmer Rouge defectors pose dilemma for Cambodia

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Sisophon meets a guerrilla commander whose switch may spell the end of Pol Pot's terror

MORE than 30 years in the service of Pol Pot have not made Ta Sou an affable man. He greets visitors with a coldly appraising, disdainful stare. His replies come in terse monosyllables, interrupted as he lights a cigarette, shielding the flame with the stump of the right arm shot off by government troops 23 years ago.

The commander of Khmer Rouge division 519 personifies a dilemma confronting Cambodian leaders. Ta Sou is among a group of Khmer Rouge commanders, controlling vital bases near the western border with Thailand, who say they have deserted Pol Pot in favour of his old associate Ieng Sary. Their claim has inspired the best hope yet of burying the menace of Pol Pot's terror.

Yet, since the rift surfaced on August 8 with a Khmer Rouge radio broadcast denouncing Ieng Sary as a "traitor" and "piece of excrement", no one has yet surrendered to the government. Officials in Phnom Penh fear that a deal granting amnesty to Ieng Sary, who was closely implicated in the mass killing by the Khmer Rouge, agreed by a bitterly divided government may sow the seeds of future political instability.

"We have just replaced one Khmer Rouge with another: the problem is still there," a government insider says.

are positive. Two divisional commanders started the revolt against Pol Pot and his diehard loyalists. Now, says Ta Sou, there are six.

Recent reports suggest the rift has spread to units near Pol Pot's key northern base, and even that Khieu Samphan, a veteran Potist and the Khmer Rouge's nominal president, is about to defect.

Relations between government and rebels seem almost cordial. Phnom Penh has sent food and weapons and promised military back-up in the event of an attack. Government generals even threw a party for rebel commanders in Sisophon last month.

Troops say they mingle with Khmer Rouge guerrillas along the erstwhile front line. Soldiers' wives are doing a healthy trade supplying consumer goods to the rebels.

As to how many Khmer Rouge troops have rebelled, Ta Sou mutters: "I don't know." Military analysts in Phnom Penh "guess" that there are between 2,500 and 4,000 troops, and some 30,000 civilians, in the rebel bases, probably representing more than half the Khmer Rouge's military strength.

The implications for Pol Pot are potentially crippling. The Khmer Rouge has been haemorrhaging since its leaders opted out of United Nations-run elections in 1993. The rebel bases of Pailin and Phnom Malai control the centre of the lucrative logging and gem mining that are the Khmer Rouge's main source of income.

Without them, Pol Pot's rump guerrilla movement would control only isolated bases. "It would cease to be a political threat," one Western diplomat says. "It would become a law-and-order threat."

Ta Sou says the rebels wanted to make peace with Phnom Penh, while Pol Pot and such veterans as Son Sen and Ta Mok wanted to keep up the military struggle.

Ieng Sary was "as close to a buddy as Pol Pot had", according to the Cambodia scholar David Chandler. He butchered intellectuals by the hundreds in the fanatical post-1975 Maoist regime.

But the bases around Pailin and Phnom Malai diverged from Khmer Rouge orthodoxy, allowing private businesses and property, freedom of movement and religious freedom. Attempts by Ta Mok and Son Sen to check the drift, recollectivise property and ban Buddhist worship ignited the rebellion.

The reaction is a surge in hopes for peace. "If Khmer and Khmer talk, it means real peace; it can't come from outside," one official says, brushing aside foreign disdain for reconciliation with Ieng Sary, who was deeply implicated in the mass slaughter.

But the rebels are attaching tough conditions. "This is not a surrender," Ieng Sary insists in an interview to be aired by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The government has promised to guarantee continued ownership of property and to allow the rebel base controllers to continue as local bosses. But Ieng Sary and his followers want much more.

He unveiled a Democratic National United Movement last month, apparently intended to relaunch his political career. He wants candidates put up for elections due in 1998, a position for himself in the government, and the rebels' base area to remain under their armed control until just before the polls.

If the negotiations are successful, it will spell the end of the Khmer Rouge, Ieng Sary says, adding menacingly: "If we can't get the result we want, the Khmer Rouge [still] exists, but broken [in two]."

In the first sign of resistance to these demands, the co-prime minister, Hun Sen, said last weekend that the rebels had to relinquish their territory before they could form a political party.

Ieng Sary's movement could yet find a foothold in popular politics. "In a year the image could be reversed and . . . they could be a real force," one ruling party insider says.

But questions remain about their underlying motives, and whether relations with Pol Pot have really ruptured. Cambodians recall the Khmer Rouge tactics of the sixties, which combined clandestine with above-ground operations.

"If Pol Pot still controls troops, who could say the Khmer Rouge problem is solved?" one government source asks — a point with which Ta Sou agrees.

The Clinton Curse claims new victim



CHICAGO: The real election campaign got under way as President Clinton left the scene of his broadly successful Democratic convention, and embarked on yet another coach tour through yet another stretch of the US heartland. Bob Dole was in California, trying to claw that most populous of states back from Clinton's awesome lead in the opinion polls, larger than even Ronald Reagan's at this point in his 1984 landslide.

And yet the Curse of the Clintons struck again in Chicago, finding another victim to add to the toll of those imprisoned, disgraced or even dead, after giving their loyalties to the president. This time it was Dick Morris, the political guru who had crafted the president's comeback strategy. He resigned after a New York tabloid reported that he had been paying $200 an hour for the toe-sucking delights of a call girl.

During their dalliances, she claimed he let her listen in on his phone calls to the president, showed her advance texts of Mrs Clinton's and Vice-President Gore's convention speeches, which must have been really fun, and told her long before the public announcement that there was evidence of life on Mars, which must have made her doubt his sanity. Clearly, prostitution can be a very taxing business in Washington DC.

Nor is it lucrative. She made some $15,000 from her client, and gossip says she scored another $60,000 when she took her [illegible] She hid tape recorders and cameras in the room to establish her evidence, and the scandal briefly rained on Bill Clinton's big parade. The Morris affair does not seem to have hurt the president, just as Lyndon Johnson's 1964 campaign was not jolted when one of his aides was arrested in a public lavatory for a homosexual act. And few Democrats mourned. Morris, although a regular political consultant to Clinton since the seventies, had lately helped elect Senators Jesse Helms and Trent Lott, two of the most rightwing figures in the Republican party. He was blamed for Clinton's rightward march of the past two years, the ditching of the old welfare safety net, the pledge to balance the budget and to haggle with the Republican Congress far more effectively than he had managed when the Democrats ran the place.

His authority over his unified party complete, Clinton's move to the right was rewarded with his acclamation by the Democratic party's most liberal standard-bearers. Formally nominated by Senator Chris Dodd, the party chairman who had called his welfare reform "unconscionable", the president and his centrist political strategy were rousingly defended by Jesse Jackson, Senator Ted Kennedy and former Governor Mario Cuomo, the old leaders of the Democrats' supplanted left wing.

Ramming home his determination to command the centre, Clinton stole yet more of the Republicans' thunder in his acceptance speech, proposing to cut the capital gains tax. But rather than woo stockholders too openly, he targeted the cut at home owners cashing in their inflated house prices.

Arriving to his second party coronation from a four-day train trip through the industrial Midwest, Clinton was greeted by his wife, fresh from her own heartening welcome by the delegates, and by Al Gore, who heard the party chant of "Four More Years" turn into "Twelve More Years".

Only the relatively modest television audience of 24 million for the first night dampened the mood of unified triumph in a party now drilled to the president's "New Democrat" ideology. A fraction better than the Republicans two weeks ago, it was well short of the Democratic audience of 1992. Television viewers saw a carefully scripted variety programme of laser shows and musical interludes, packaging a formal act of fealty by a predominantly liberal party that has settled for a moderate leader who can win elections. The Democrats' liberal heroes bent the knee to Clinton as the price for their one evening in the national spotlight, a two-hour burst of the old religion that will have to satisfy them for four more years.

"We need to have the faith to hold on," Jesse Jackson told the convention, after earlier [illegible] selling "revolutionary patience" at meetings where there were no cameras present. "When we, the people, coalesce with an enlightened president we can change America for the better.



The US this week

Martin Walker

"President Clinton has been our first line of defence against the Newt Gingrich contract, America's rightwing assault on the elderly, our students and civil rights. We must maintain with integrity the first lines of defence as they attack the integrity of the First Lady".

"He deserves four more years. He will win and deserve to win. Stand tall, Mr President," Jackson concluded in a barn-storming and emotional speech that countered Dole's wartime record with memories of his own father returning home from the war, required to travel in segregated trains and buses.

"Being faithful to Democratic principles requires more than guarding the museum of the past," said New York's former governor, Mario Cuomo, who praised the president for "standing virtually alone against the radical right and the rabid revolutionaries led by Newt Gingrich".

Hillary Clinton met head on the Republican sneers at her book It Takes A Village — (To Raise A Child) and took up the challenge of Mrs Elizabeth Dole for a separate duel between the first ladies. Her speech from the podium was larded with intimacies about her husband being present at their daughter's birth, and their lying awake all night as Chelsea spent a night in hospital having her tonsils removed.

Shrinking from her disastrous earlier stab at a co-presidency, she used the phrase "my husband" 16 times in a speech that was part schoolmarm, part dutiful wife. When she stood by the principles of the health reform bill she had crafted, Mrs Clinton talked of "the president's proposals for health care reform". She was greeted ecstatically by the most supportive audience of all, a Democratic convention composed of 54 per cent women, and in which 46 per cent of all delegates define themselves as liberals [illegible] and one in six is a teacher.

Whatever the verdict of the voters in November, this is already the second Clinton administration, a team transformed from the ill-fated blend of young campaigners and old Arkansas cronies who accompanied him to the White House in 1993. The second administration was formed in the disastrous summer of 1994, after his and Hillary's health reform had gone down to defeat and his crime bill seemed to face the same fate.

In desperation, he sacked Mack McLarty, his boyhood friend from Arkansas, who was out of his depth as White House chief of staff, and brought in the veteran congressman and budget expert Leon Panetta. With Panetta came a new White House press secretary, Mike McCurry, the experienced Democratic party operative who had performed well as State Department spokesman. Unlike the hapless Dee Dee Myers, now a talk-show hostess, McCurry was brought into the top-level meetings, and at least knew what he was not supposed to say. More important, with Panetta came discipline.

"It was like the difference between going from college to your first real job, where you had to show up on time, there was a hierarchy, there were clear orders, and you could not just hang around," said one young White House aide who survived the transformation.

Under the first Clinton administration, ex-senator Lloyd Bentsen was Treasury Secretary, the national economic council was run by Wall Street banker Robert Rubin, and the White House counsel was Hillary's old boss, Bernard Nussbaum. Of them all, only Bentsen really knew Washington, and he was no economist.

Under Clinton Mark Two, Bentsen has retired, Rubin is running the Treasury in a way that appeals to the bond markets, and the legal department is run by a veteran Washington insider, Jack Quinn, who came from the vice-president's staff. Indeed, one important aspect of the Clinton recovery has been the growing influence of Gore, not only as a political centrist on every issue but the environment, but by far the most active and powerful vice-president in memory.

It took a lot of false starts, or perhaps several visits by the curse of the Clintons, to get this effective team into place. The Arkansas mafia from Hillary Clinton's Rose law firm [illegible] committed suicide under intense personal pressure. Assistant attorney-general Webster Hubbell went to prison, after being found to have falsified his law firm expenses.

William Kennedy, another Rose firm partner transplanted to the White House counsel's office, resigned as controversy began to build over the sacking of the White House travel staff. Another former business partner of Mrs Clinton in a lucrative cellular phone venture, David Watkins, resigned after being found out using a presidential helicopter to go to a golf course. Of the old Arkansas chums, only his devoted personal fixer, Bruce Lindsey, remains.

CLINTON had three stabs at appointing a female attorney-general, finally settling for a spikily independent-minded Janet Reno, who is unlikely to last long beyond the election. He wanted a cabinet "that looks like America", but lost his black commerce secretary Ron Brown, to an air crash, and his black agriculture secretary, Mike Espy, to an ethics scandal. His Hispanic housing secretary, Henry Cisneros, barely survived a lawsuit from an aggrieved mistress.

Perhaps the most disastrous department of Clinton's early months was the Pentagon. Former Congressman Les Aspin was out of his depth as defence secretary. He was unable to control the prestigious chairman of the chiefs of staff, General Colin Powell, who always had an excellent reason for not exposing US troops to risk.

Powell, who jolted the Clinton honeymoon with his insubordinate campaign against allowing gays into the military, single-handedly vetoed any firm US action in Bosnia. Perhaps the most overestimated man in US politics, Powell had initially opposed the Gulf war, and even thereafter imposed an almost stagnant caution on US foreign policy.

When US troops were killed in Mogadishu and humiliated in Haiti, Powell ensured it was never his fault, and retired with honour to join the Republican party and finally pursue his anti-Clinton campaign in the open. The initial Director of Central Intelligence, James Woolsey, whose tenure was haunted by the exposure of Aldrich Ames as a KGB mole, has also endorsed the Dole campaign. In short, Clinton began with a defence and intelligence team that was neither competent nor loyal.

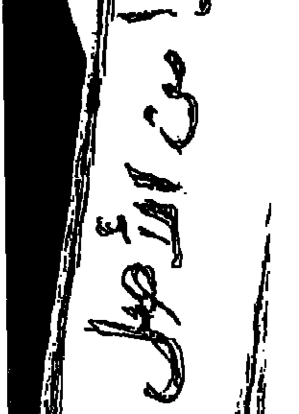
[illegible] the scientist-tycoon William Perry, and the succession of General John Shalikashvili to run the Joint Chiefs of Staff, transformed Clinton's control of foreign affairs. He finally had a reliable Pentagon that was prepared to use air power and deploy troops in Bosnia, to use force to restore democracy to Haiti, and to face down Chinese provocation with aircraft carrier task forces.

There are two crucial survivors in Clinton's innermost circle from the early days: Hillary Clinton and George Stephanopoulos, perhaps the most liberal of his advisers. They are backed up by the extremely powerful deputy chief of staff at the White House, the old 1960s anti-war radical, Harold Ickes. The 1992 campaign strategists, James Carville, Paul Begala, Mandy Grunwald and pollster Stan Greenberg, were replaced by the ill-fated Dick Morris. His resignation leaves a worrisome gap.

Clinton's political recovery since the disastrous first two years has been marked by a profound shift to the centre right, and to a fiscally cautious decision to cut the deficit, a pattern shrouded by his skill in presenting himself as the saviour of popular social programmes from the Republican "extremists". This is no longer the "Putting People First" Clinton campaign of 1992. The populists have gone.

The one adviser certain to stay is Hillary, who is almost visibly itching to make another stab at ambitious social reform in a second term unrestrained by the prospect of re-election. But Clinton's political debt to the ever-loyal Al Gore is incalculable. One of the biggest factors in a Clinton second term will be the obligation not to spoil Gore's chances of succeeding him.

Washington Post, page 16



Watershed of East and West

OBITUARY
Masao Maruyama

PROFESSOR Masao Maruyama, who has died aged 82, was one of Japan's most creative political thinkers.

In 1942, he took the new chair in the history of oriental political thought at Tokyo Imperial University's law faculty. Two years later, as he was just finishing his final article in his trilogy on pre-modern Confucianism and nationalism — works which are still the true classics on the subject — he was conscripted. At the war's end he was a private soldier in the ruins of Hiroshima.

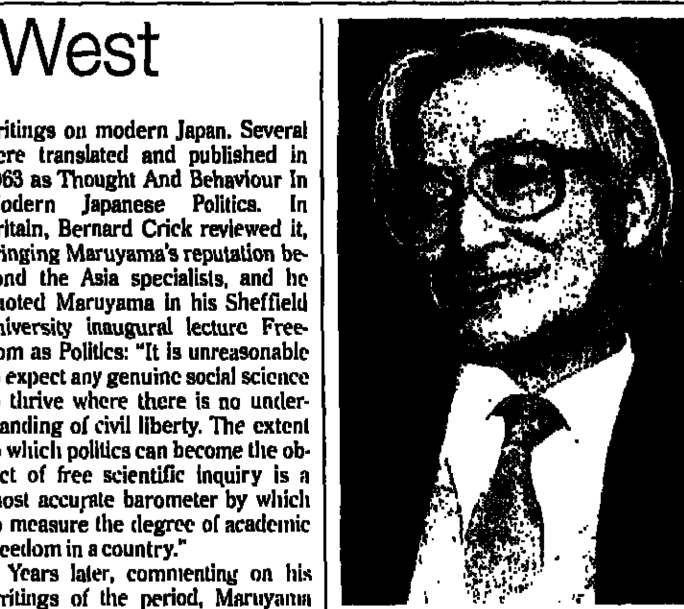
Maruyama's élitist education paralleled the descent of Japan from a relatively free society into militarist frenzy. He went to Tokyo First Metropolitan Middle School, First Higher School and graduated from the University in 1937. The rise of militarism, and how to stop it recurring, became one of his major themes and eventually brought him back to the writings of ancient Japan. He was intellectually active until the very end, overseeing the publications of his 15-volume Works. He had to be persuaded to overcome his reluctance to undertake this project because of his modest scepticism of the value of his writings. But he altered almost nothing, even those things which he wrote before the end of the war, revealing the astonishing continuity of his intellectual relevance and his political integrity.

The sophistication of his analytical method comes out nowhere more clearly than in his work on East-West parallels — as when, for example, he describes the decline in one school of Confucian orthodoxy in relation to the downfall of the political order during the era of the Tokugawa dynasty, and reminds the reader of the parallel with the perception, as developed in the philosophy of the followers of St Thomas Aquinas, of the universe and the medieval world order; this was a reflection of Maruyama's agile and total familiarity with German philosophical writings.

He wrote about his indebtedness at the time, in particular, to Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia and Max Weber's writings. He was also a close reader of such scholars as Ernst Troeltsch and Wilhelm Dilthey, having been deeply influenced by Hegel. His trilogy was translated and published in 1974 as Studies In The Intellectual History Of Tokugawa Japan.

After the war, he wrote essays on the causes of Japan's fascist and militarist experiences and on the baleful excesses of nationalism. He probed into the Japanese mind to explain why it had to happen. These essays were also a powerful plea to Japanese intellectuals to be involved in politics, to nurture and preserve what he saw as a fragile post-war democratic system. They helped the Japanese understand the country for which they had been asked to sacrifice their lives, which then was totally discredited. These essays, too, have become classics among writings on modern Japan. Several were translated and published in 1963 as Thought And Behaviour In Modern Japanese Politics. In Britain, Bernard Crick reviewed it, bringing Maruyama's reputation beyond the Asia specialists, and he quoted Maruyama in his Sheffield university inaugural lecture Freedom as Politics: "It is unreasonable to expect any genuine social science to thrive where there is no understanding of civil liberty. The extent to which politics can become the object of free scientific inquiry is a most accurate barometer by which to measure the degree of academic freedom in a country."

Years later, commenting on his writings of the period, Maruyama shyly said it was like opening a market stall to sell a product that was not his own speciality. His father was a well-known liberal political commentator, and sometimes Maruyama could not contain his inherited journalistic passion. His articles revealed again his encyclopaedic familiarity with the European intellectual tradition, now amplified by extensive reading in the American political classics and contemporary political science. After the war, Marxism became the predominant Japanese intellectual trend but Maruyama never became a Marxist. He disdained grandiose theorising and considered that ideas are far too independently powerful to be dismissed as a mere mirroring of the production system. Yet with his extensive reading of Marx, he could hold his own in Marxist theological debates.



Masao Maruyama: search for the Japanese soul

From the mid-1960s he began, as a natural progression from his earlier writing, his search for what he originally called the prototype of the Japanese mentality. He later renamed it the "substratum" and sometimes called it "the obstinate bass". What is it that gives Japanese the inordinate ability to absorb foreign ideas and institutions — as well as to adjust them to the needs of Japan?

He made meticulous and fascinating philological analyses of the chronicles, poetry and other writings of ancient Japan. He aimed to identify what it was that was truly original in the structure of the Japanese mentality which has affected and defined the incessant inflow of foreign ideas and institutions.

He came to argue that the persistent "obstinate bass" image which the Japanese had of the universe was the notion that "the beginning of the heaven and the earth is in the present". If the present is forever the beginning of the universe, there is no incumbency of the past to inhibit the acceptance of something new or alien should it meet the need of the present.

Such a mentality would discard the intellectual import just as casually, or store it on the shelves of history for later use. Put crudely, his argument seems to be that this obstinately recurring pattern in thinking made the Japanese utilitarian, unable to comprehend the moral or historical meanings of the foreign ideas or institutions that Japan so easily grafts upon itself.

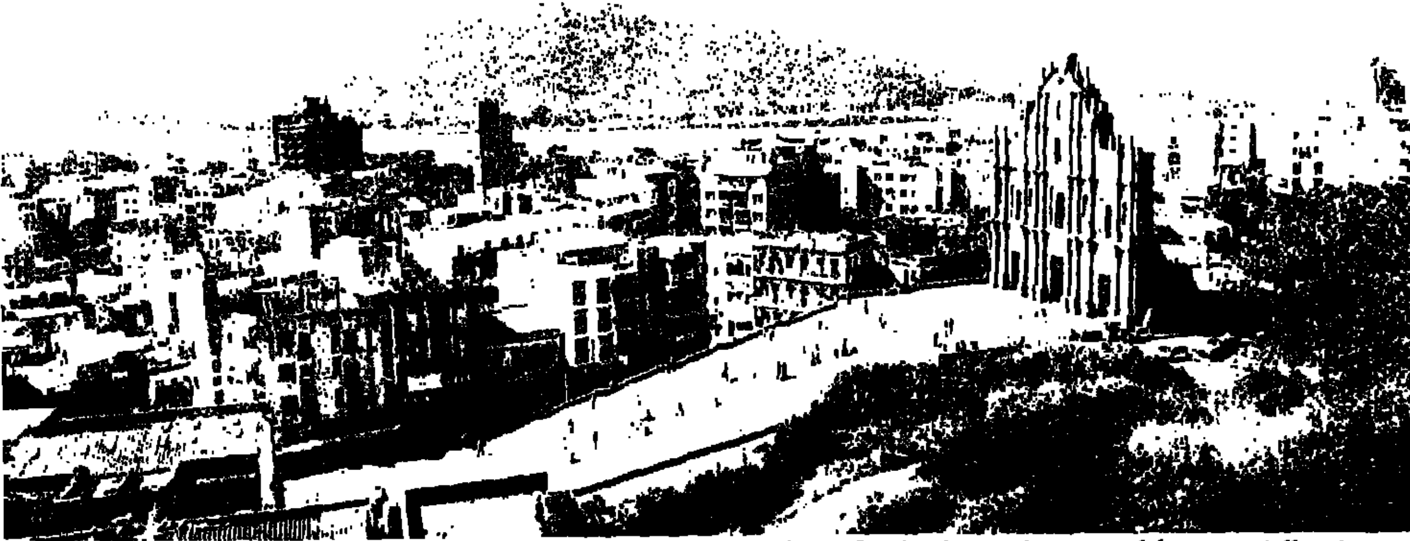
His style was sometimes considered Teutonic. But his writing was so carefully crafted that his logical clarity and the flow of his thought never faltered. He was a great essayist who wrote as well on music, theatre, mores or about his friends. Then his style would be simpler and even lyrical.

Harvard and Princeton presented him with honorary doctorates. He was a visiting professor or scholar at Harvard, Oxford, Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies and the University of California at Berkeley.

He is survived by his wife, Yukari, and a son. His wife's moving role in the life of Maruyama defies any description.

Dr Tatsuo Arima

Professor Masao Maruyama, [illegible] scientist, born March 22, [illegible]; died August [illegible], 1996



Unholy row . . . The façade of the burnt-out St Paul's cathedral stands opposite the Jesuit school at the centre of the current dispute

Bitter feud divides Jesuits in Macao

Conspiracy claims at a school run by the Society of Jesus have led to a courtroom confrontation, writes **Andrew Higgins**

FATHER Manuel Teixeira thought he had seen it all. After 70 years in Europe's oldest surviving outpost in the Far East, and tireless labour in dusty archives chronicling nearly half a millennium of history, the 84-year-old Catholic priest takes trauma in his stride.

During the second world war, he saw starving beggars eat the vomit of drunken Japanese soldiers staggering between bar and brothel. During China's cultural revolution, he watched local Red Guards besiege the bishop's palace demanding that priests preach the teachings of Chairman Mao.

No drama since Portugal established its tiny but tenacious toehold on the China coast in the early 16th century has escaped his scrutiny. Never before, though, has he encountered a saga quite like the scandal now poisoning the sacred heart of the Cidade do São Nome de Deus de Macao (Macao, City of the Holy Name of God).

"It is a truly terrible thing. We hope and pray that a solution can be found. But no power in Macao can do anything," says a disconsolate Father Teixeira. "Only Rome can solve this problem."

The battle lines in a noisy fracas involve accusations of financial skulduggery, forged signatures, evil spirits, sexual manipulation and medical malpractice. The dispute is defined most succinctly by a suit under review in Macao's courts — Jesuit v Jesuit.

The Society of Jesus, founded in 1540 by St Ignatius of Loyola, is the largest order in the Roman Catholic Church. It takes pride in its rigid, almost military discipline and obedience is its cardinal principle. But a breach of this discipline has provoked the feud now pitting Jesuit against Jesuit — and foiled attempts by police, lawyers and bureaucrats to separate the combatants.

At the centre of the dispute is a Jesuit-run school, the Instituto Melchior Carnerio, and the valuable land on which it sits in the heart of the old city. The school stands opposite Macao's most popular tourist attraction after casinos — the ruins of St Paul's, a vast Baroque cathedral designed by an Italian Jesuit in the early 17th century and Christianity's most magnificent monument in Asia. The main body of the cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1835 but its glorious façade survived.

Brooding in his office across from the cathedral's ruins sits Benjamin Pires, aged 79, the school's Jesuit founder and headmaster of 35 years. Although physically ailing, he is fiercely robust in his defiance of an order from his Jesuit superior that he retire to make way for a younger head.

"They want to sell our land. It is worth millions," he says of his colleagues in the Society of Jesus. "This whole thing is a conspiracy. They are jealous and greedy."

As doggedly determined as Father Pires is his principal adversary, Father Luis Sequeira, the superior of Macao's small but influential Jesuit community. "Obedience is our transcendent rule but Father Pires refuses to obey," says the superior. "This school has become his little kingdom and he is not going to leave his castle."

Determined to prise him out, Father Sequeira has had the school's bank account frozen, appealed for back-up from his own superiors, consulted Mother Teresa and successfully lobbied the Macao government to withdraw the school's licence.

He denies accusations of a secret plan to sell property developers the school's land, said to be worth at least $1.5 million. He says Father Pires and his supporters have engaged in property speculation by buying a house in Portugal with mysterious funds.

The superior says Father Pires has fallen under the spell of a Chinese woman who helped found the school, and her American-educated daughter.

Much of the argument has focused on a retirement letter Father Pires allegedly wrote in May last year. "He signed the letter in front of me," says Father Sequiera.

The aged headmaster dismisses the letter as a fabrication and has tried to have his superior arrested for criminal forgery.

Father Pires is now seeking redress through the courts and has hired lawyers in Lisbon and Macao to press his case against the local Jesuit hierarchy. Father Sequiera has taken legal advice of his own. He has also secured the prayers of Mother Teresa.

What makes the tug-of-war so painful for Catholics and non-Catholics alike in Macao is that so many owe their education to the Jesuits.

"It is all very sad for the Church," says Father Lancelot Rodrigues, the Jesuit-educated head of Catholic social services. "The Jesuits built Macao. It is such a pity it all has to end like this."

Hardline loyalists reject 'quit Ulster or die' order

David Sharrock

A GRASSROOTS loyalist who played a role in July's Drumcree crisis defiantly spurned a death threat last week from the leadership of the protestant paramilitaries.

Billy Wright, who held talks with the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, during the four-day stand-off at Drumcree church, said he was prepared to die.

Mr Wright, aged 34, was given 72 hours to leave Ulster or face "summary justice" from the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC), the umbrella leadership of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, Ulster Volunteer Force and Red Hand Commando.

The statement is evidence of a serious rift in loyalist ranks between those who are prepared to maintain their ceasefire — chiefly the Belfast leadership cadre — and the hard-line grassroots in country areas who want to return to war.

Mr Wright supported the ceasefire decision of October 1994 but since the IRA ended its cessation in February has become increasingly sceptical of its value. He has been openly critical of the Progressive Unionist Party, which speaks for the UVF in the Stormont talks.

The threat to Mr Wright and another man, Alec Kerr — who was arrested last month and is on remand facing terrorist charges — comes amid the gloomiest predictions for the future of the UVF ceasefire, with senior figures now saying that the peace process is over.

On Sunday Mr Kerr's elderly parents were injured when a grenade was thrown through the living room window at the family home in Dunmurry in South Belfast. They were treated for shock and minor injuries. Mr Kerr's wife and 16-year-old son were not injured.



Billy Wright: Impervious to paramilitary death threats KEVIN BOYES

Politicians in Ulster have been anxiously trying to mediate in the crisis, which threatens to ignite a power battle among the paramilitaries.

In a statement smuggled out of prison Mr Kerr said: "If I am to be accused of treason and threatened with summary execution for pointing out that which I believe to be true, then so be it. The loyalist people will judge for themselves."

The gravity of the situation is underlined by the fact that the CLMC realises that if it carries out its threat, it will be in breach of its ceasefire — and will rule the small loyalist parties, the PUP and the Ulster Democratic Party, which speaks for the Ulster Freedom Fighters, out of the Stormont talks that are due to start again this week.

Such radical action suggests that what is taking place is a concerted effort by the loyalist leadership to reassert its authority and call the bluff of the dissenters.

Mr Wright, however, seemed impervious to the threats. "I'm a loyalist, I hold a different political viewpoint from certain people. I hold the same viewpoint as 97 per cent of the Unionist population and I will not allow anyone to impose their political will on myself," he said.

He said he would not be leaving Northern Ireland nor would he be going into hiding. "I have had three of my family murdered by the IRA. If I have to die, I have to die. I have had numerous attempts on my life by the IRA. You know, we die for what we believe in."

The Democratic Unionist Party came to the support of Mr Wright. Justice spokesman Ian Paisley Junior said: "Leaving the personalities aside, any such threat in this society is contemptible, repugnant and wrong. We condemn it and we condemn it unreservedly."

But the Ulster Unionist deputy leader, John Taylor, said it cast a shadow over the PUP and UDP's continued involvement in talks. "Certainly the role of the fringe political parties must now be up for reconsideration," he said.

The CLMC statement read: "As from midnight tonight [August 27] Mr Billy Wright has 72 hours to leave Ulster. Mr Alec Kerr must remain at all times in isolation whilst in custody. Upon his release he must leave Ulster within 72 hours. Failure by either man to conform with this directive will result in summary justice for their treasonable and subversive activities. Anyone supporting these persons in any way or their actions will be similarly dealt with."

RUC appoints new chief

Christopher Elliott and Owen Bowcott

NORTHERN Ireland's police force skipped a generation when a 47-year-old former rugby player was last week appointed as the new Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Age and political acumen are thought to have given Ronnie Flanagan, a deputy chief constable and the son of a shipyard worker, the edge over Blair Wallace, the 58-year-old other RUC deputy chief constable and his main rival, who has vast operational experience. The third short-listed candidate was Bill Taylor, Commissioner of the City of London police.

Mr Flanagan, a Protestant who is married with three children, said after his appointment, which carries a £100,000-a-year salary: "Northern Ireland cannot withstand another summer like this one. The country crept right to the edge of the abyss. It pulled back and I believe it will continue to draw back."

Rebuilding relations and trust was now the priority, he added.

AFTER THE FAIRYTALE

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Back to basics after royal divorce

THE ROYAL DIVORCE became final last week in a quiet court of the Family Division at the High Court in London. But the 176 words of decree absolute 5,029, which put them finally asundér, provoked a flurry of speculation and a myriad questions but few answers.

Would Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, remarry? Could he marry a divorcee, such as his long-time friend, Camilla Parker Bowles? Would the Church go along with it? Would the public tolerate a Queen Camilla?

The Prime Minister said there was no immediate prospect of the Prince's marrying again. Prince Charles has also said he has no immediate intention of marrying Camilla or anyone else. So constitutional questions can be brushed aside momentarily, but not for ever.

Even before the decree absolute was granted, an opinion poll suggested that remarriage would incur the opposition of more than half the Anglican clergy. But the same poll reported an erosion of support for the idea that the monarch should be Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

The royal family, which is thinking about reforming itself, could also sever the tie between Church and State, relieving a future King Charles of the need to conform with Anglican doctrine.

Most commentators expect the prince gradually to introduce Mrs Parker Bowles to the public as his regular companion in the belief that his future subjects will, given time, come around to accepting her.

At the moment, public sympathy lies with Diana, Princess of Wales — now stripped of the title Her Royal Highness — whose stance is that of the wronged wife who was divorced against her will. Bookmakers put the odds on Charles remarrying at 5/2. The odds on the princess getting rehitched are shorter, at 6/4.

On the day the divorce became absolute, she was attending a long-standing engagement, in full view of the cameras, at the English National Ballet in London. Her ex-husband was 500 miles away at Balmoral in Scotland, on holiday with his parents and sons, beyond reach of long-focus lenses. For both of the ex-couple, it was an all too typical first day of the rest of their lives.

IN WHAT looked like a damage limitation exercise, the Masonic Year Book, listing all the leading figures in freemasonry, went on sale to the public, at £11 a copy. It has been published annually for members since the last century, but has never before been unleashed on the public.

There was controversy last month when Sir Frederick Crawford, appointed chairman of a new body to review miscarriages of justice, was found to be a freemason. The year book shows him to have been promoted to Junior Grand Warden of the élite Royal Arch order. Another high-ranking officer of the Royal Arch is Sir Maurice Drake, a retired High Court judge.

The book lists three dozen judges and barristers as holding senior masonic ranks. Two of the judges sit in the Court of Appeal. One of their masonic colleagues is Lord Belstead, chairman of the Parole Board.

Graham Redman, Assistant Grand Secretary, said disarmingly that the Freemasons welcomed public interest in the book. But there will still be scepticism of the masons' insistence that the world of the rolled-up trouser leg and funny handshake is no longer a secret organisation. The vast majority of junior masons are excluded from the year book, and senior figures can ask to have their names omitted.

AN INQUIRY was ordered into the use of a CS spray by police to force a mother to let go of her 10-month-old daughter, who was being taken into care. Officers of the same force, in Cleveland, have also been asked to explain why they used the spray on two children, aged 13 and 14, who had barricaded themselves in a bedroom of a local authority home.

The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, last month gave police the go-ahead to arm officers with the gas sprays, though some forces have declined to use them because of anxieties about possible harm that could be caused by gas droplets left on skin and clothing.

Guidelines say that the sprays should be used as an instrument of last resort by officers who perceive themselves to be in physical danger. Bob Pitts, chairman of social services in Middlesbrough, where both incidents happened, complained that the sprays had been used as a "quick fix" solution, in breach of the guidelines.

Since trials began six months ago, CS spray has been used by Cleveland police 115 times, though only 68 times by the Metropolitan police, and just 10 times in North Yorkshire.

PERSISTENT teenage criminals will lose their right to remain anonymous, and could also face night-time curfews, under plans being considered by the Home Secretary. A decision to scrap the 6[illegible]-year-old rule protecting child offenders would mark the further erosion of a separate system of juvenile justice.

Mr Howard wants magistrates to be given the power to publish the names of serious teenage offenders to humiliate "tearaways" and shame their parents into taking responsibility. At present they can be named only in exceptional circumstances. Labour is thinking along the same lines, but would not identify those under 16. Mr Howard is expected not to specify a lower age limit.

HMS REPULSE, the last of the Royal Navy's Polaris submarines, was decommissioned on the Clyde after nearly 30 years' service. Two bigger and more powerful Trident boats will take over as Britain's nuclear deterrent until the full four-boat force is in service by the end of the century.

In a tribute to the Polaris force, the Prime Minister said it had patrolled, "undetected by friend or foe, every minute of every day of every year" since 1969. He had no doubt that Britain was right to maintain a minimum credible strategic nuclear deterrent. "Even though circumstances have changed, the world still remains an uncertain and dangerous place."

700,000 BSE cattle 'fed to humans'

Tim Radford

MORE than 700,000 cattle with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) may have been turned into food for humans by the end of 1995, scientists estimate.

Agriculture ministers and health experts claimed for a decade — and continued to claim until March 20 this year — that British beef was safe and humans were not at risk.

But now scientists on whom the Government relies for advice on the Aids epidemic confirm what opponents of the Ministry of Agriculture have been saying for at least three years: that throughout the BSE decade, sick cattle have been slaughtered for food.

A team led by Professor Roy Anderson, of the Centre for the Epidemiology of Infectious Disease, used techniques developed to calculate the progress of HIV infection in Britain to help predict the impact of various culling policies.

They say the BSE epidemic will fade rapidly: more than 90 per cent of all the victims have already fallen sick and died. They predict that — in the absence of culling — another 6,950 cases of BSE have yet to be diagnosed before the disease fades towards extinction in 2001. But the end of BSE in cattle will not end worries about human health.

There have been 161,412 confirmed cases of BSE in Britain since the discovery of the disease in 1986. The suspicion is that it was spread by contaminated feed — made with protein from dead cattle and sheep — and a ban on the use of that had, they say, an immediate impact.

But contaminated feed continued to infect animals until mid-1994: since then, they believe, new infections have been passed from mother to calf. The scientists calculated a mean incubation period of five years for BSE. But beef cattle are normally slaughtered within three years. So the team had to make estimates of the number of animals that might have gone to the abbattoir with BSE, but not yet with any symptoms.

Any infectious tissue, they think would have been in the brain, spinal cord, tonsils, eyes, thymus and other organs. Use of these in human food was prohibited seven years ago.

About 446,000 infected animals would have been slaughtered for consumption before the specified bovine offal ban at the end of 1989, said Dr Christl Donnelly, one of the team.

He thinks that the infectiousness of undiagnosed animals would be very low for more than half the incubation period: however, the potential to infect would then rise drastically towards the end. "We can say that in order to reduce substantially the number of cases of BSE that we will see — 50 per cent of what we would see without culling — you need to cull a million cattle to the end of 1996."

This would also have to be accompanied by "maternal targeting" — the search for, and slaughter of, the offspring of cows that were diagnosed as having BSE, because most new cases, the researchers believe, will arise from infection at birth or suckling: until recently, ministry officials have held that the only source of infection was by contaminated feed.

In a further development it was revealed that meat banned for human consumption because of mad cow disease was used in baby food in the eighties, according to government experts.

An academic paper that emerged last week and was first published in 1986 by staff at the Laboratory of the Government Chemist shows that mechanically recovered meat (MRM) was used in "infant foods and special diets for the disabled".

In 1995 the Government banned MRM producers from using flesh from the spinal column for fear it carried BSE. The industry blasts off this kind of meat using high-pressure hoses. It is then processed into a paste that has commonly been used in pies and sausages. Baby food manufacturers deny they used it, but it was detected by government scientists.

● A farmer has died from CJD, the fourth in Britain to die from the human equivalent of mad cow disease. But scientists emphasised that it did not prove BSE could be transmitted to humans.

Tourist trap . . . French farmers used stock last week to make their point in front of the Eiffel tower. President Jacques Chirac has been suspected of complacency towards British beef policy since calling for more understanding in the spring, but he will have to act quickly to avoid action by farmers hit by the mad cow crisis. Meat consumption in France has declined by between 10 and 30 per cent since March and the strength of the French franc remains an obstacle to exports PHOTOGRAPH PHILIPPE WOJAZER

Exam boards may merge

John Carvel

THE Government has served notice on the examination boards that they should merge into two or three conglomerates to stem allegations of a competitive devaluation of A level and GCSE standards.

Gillian Shephard, the education and employment secretary, said last week she wanted to remove any suspicion that the six boards may be gradually lowering the pass standard for each grade in order to attract business from each other.

The A level pass rate this year further increased by 1.8 per cent, to 85.8 per cent. The GCSE pass rate at grades A*-C increased by 1 per cent, to 53.7 per cent. Critics allege that schools are shopping around to raise their position in league tables by picking the easiest exams.

"I do not think the case for total change has been proved, but there is disquiet at the effect of having a wide range of exam boards. We are discussing that," said Mrs Shephard.

She added that she did not want to "nationalise" the examination system — "which is what one monolithic examination board under government control would amount to" — but there were alternatives to either the fragmented status quo or a monolith.

"A midway point might be to reduce the number of bodies by merging them into two or three," thus making it easier to control standards. The Government had power to influence the outcome because it could withhold validation from any board not meeting ministers' requirements, she said.

"The purpose of an exam is to show what candidates can achieve, but I don't think we expect everybody to pass every exam. People have to be rigorous in defining excellence of achievement. I am determined that exam boards should deliver that."

Meanwhile the Government is to tackle chronic under-achievement by setting individual targets for every school to ratchet up performance in tests at 7, 11, and 14 and to improve results at GCSE and A level.

Mrs Shephard wants to calculate the standard to be expected in each of England's 25,000 primary and secondary schools after assessing the educational, social and economic background of its pupils.

Inner-city comprehensives would not be expected to match the performance of grammar schools, but their teachers and governors would be instructed to work out for themselves how to achieve goals tailored to their circumstances.

Writer gets £½m for first novel

Alex Bellos

AN Indian writer unknown outside her country has joined the ranks of the world's "superauthors" by securing advances of £500,000 for her first novel.

Arundhati Roy's book The God Of Small Things so impressed London literary agent David Godwin that he flew to meet her in Delhi as soon as he finished it. "It was a remarkable book. It has a unique combination of character and style," he said.

The 280-page novel was the subject of a closely fought auction among Britain's biggest publishers. HarperCollins imprint Flamingo eventually bought the UK rights for more than £150,000. Twelve other countries have also paid large amounts. America, Germany and Italy paid around £100,000.

Philip Gwyn Jones, Flamingo editorial director, said: "It is very unusual for a book to attract that number of publishers for a bidding war without a hook to hang it. This one just ran away because it is a masterpiece that has fallen out of the sky fully formed. They don't come around that often and when they do they deserve all the money they get."

The novel is set in Kerala, south India, and tells the story over a 24-hour period of the death of a little girl as witnessed by her two cousins.

"It has a complicated story, and there is no compromise to the reader, but whereas most literary books are tremendously stylised, in this book you really believe what the characters say," said Mr Godwin.

Miss Roy, aged 36, is well known in India. She wrote the screenplay for the film Electric Moon, which has been shown on Channel 4, and courted controversy with a high-profile article on Phoolan Devi, the so-called Bandit Queen, in the Indian media.

Whereas such large fees are commonplace in the arena of the commercial blockbuster, it is unusual for "literary" books to command such sums. Roy's revenue so far equals what Martin Amis received in his advance for The Information last year.

Her achievement is also impressive because of the interest shown in the book in Europe and the US, where there is less of a tradition of successful Indian writers.

Mr Godwin said publishing is more fast-paced than ever: "There are literary scouts all over the world whose job it is to hear about [new books]. Word now spins across the world with remarkable speed."

In Brief

A PAKISTANI heart patient has died after immigration officials blocked his trip to Britain for a bypass operation in case he overstayed his visa, even though his family had raised the funds for his treatment at a Glasgow private hospital.

A CONVICTED paedophile, Trevor Holland, who escaped during a day-trip to a theme park, was recaptured after being spotted reading about himself in a newsagent at Worthing, West Sussex.

RACISM is endemic in the criminal justice system, according to a report by the Penal Affairs Consortium that says British-born black men are nine times more likely than their white counterparts to go to jail. Home Office research shows similar rates of offending among young Afro-Caribbean and young whites, so the consortium concludes the differences can be due only to discrimination.

THE bodies of Tom and Jodi Loughlin, aged four and six, have been washed up on the Norfolk coast, 30 miles from where they went missing on August 18.

POLICE officers will face random drug tests for the first time in Britain, under a policy announced by Grampian police. All new recruits will have to take the test, and one in 10 of the 1,100 officers will face random checks once a year.

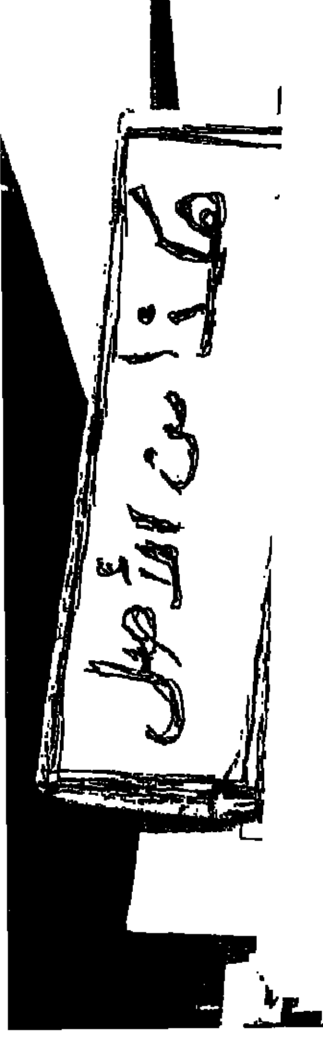
MANCHESTER Airport, which has fined Concorde £11,000 in four months for noisy take-offs, has decided to waive all future penalties against the supersonic jet, arguing that if the fines continue, Concorde will stop visiting the airport.

A BRITISH landmine expert, Christopher Howes, kidnapped five months ago by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, has been executed, a Thai newspaper reported.

THE Liberal Democrats proposed that Britain increase its aid to the Third World so that the UN's target of 0.7 per cent of annual income is reached by 2006. Since 1979 British aid has fallen from 0.51 per cent to 0.29 per cent and is set to fall to 0.26 per cent by 1997/98.

A GANG of armed robbers escaped with £2 million in cash in an east London security van attack. In a separate incident an unarmed police officer was shot in the leg by masked men attempting to rob a security van in south London.

A BRITISH climber, Steve Thornley from Devon, and two climbers from New Zealand died during an attempt to scale one of the world's most dangerous mountains, the 8,500m Disteghill Sar in Pakistan.



Political battle gears up for business vote

Michael White

LABOUR and the Conservatives are gearing up for an unprecedented contest to win the votes of business in the general election — as well as to gain donations, which Tony Blair wants to make more financially transparent.

Mr Blair and senior shadow cabinet colleagues were due to host a business conference at Westminster this week. They plan to follow it up with distribution of 10,000 leaflets explaining key policies.

At the weekend Labour HQ released the first list of big donors in 1995 to what it hopes will be a £13 million election war chest. The list included the astonishing sum of £1 million from the Political Animal Lobby (PAL), the British arm of the US-based International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). In the past, PAL has made donations to all the main British parties based on their attitude towards animal rights.

But PAL officials stressed that the latest cheque reflected Labour's commitment to a free Commons vote on a ban on fox-hunting. Mr Blair said the gift would make no difference to his policies.

The other 16 donors of more than £5,000 include four corporate donors. Pearson, the media group, gave £25,000, as it did to the Tories; Tate & Lyle cut its Tory cheque from £25,000 to £15,000 and gave £7,500 to Labour; GLC, a small City firm managing investment futures, gave £30,000; and TU Fund Management, the unions' unit trust firm, gave £20,000.

The amount of their gifts is known because they are declared in accounts. Unions still giving large sums include the engineering and electrical union AEEU; the general union GMB; the Transport and General Workers' Union; the Communication Workers' Union; the council staffs' union, Unison; and the shopworkers' union, Usdaw. No amounts are given.

Despite a £7 million surge in donations to Conservative party funds in the past year Tory finances are in a far more fragile pre-election state than predicted.

Conservative strategists still owe more than £8.5 million, mostly to local Tory associations and to companies or private individuals who have made interest-free loans.

As usual, Tory officials are coy about sources and decline to identify individual donors, some of whom surface only via the courts.

Asil Nadir, fugitive Polly Peck tycoon, gave at least £400,000, which auditors have been unable to reclaim despite routine assertions that illegal funds are always returned.

Meanwhile the Government is engaged in secret discussions with the privatised utilities to sabotage Labour's plans for a £3 billion windfall tax by diverting some of their controversial profits into a series of pre-election "regional rebates" for water and electricity customers.

Though reluctant in the past to concede customer rebates, except under pressure from industry regulators, some of the utilities are now accepting that — as the election looms with Labour still in a strong lead — it may be good politics to make a grand gesture.

● City councillor Fabian Hamilton has been selected as Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Leeds North East, in place of the barred leftwing lawyer Liz Davies.

Mr Hamilton, a Blair supporter at the centre of a row about his failed company and court-enforced debts, won by 165 to 141 votes in a run-off against Pam Tatlow.

Blair rebukes party critics

Michael White and David Ward

TONY BLAIR last week called for an end to the "sterile" debate over his leadership style.

His rebuke to the critics in his party came as he tried to brush aside the latest rebuke at the way he leads his party and to press ahead with his pre-conference campaign to persuade Labour's grassroots supporters that the leadership has set them on course for their first election victory in 25 years.

Shadow ministers gritted their teeth after the backbench anti-European Austin Mitchell wrote a bittersweet New Statesman article that praised his leader as a winner who was "in better tune with the new Britain than we are", but also warned party members that his approach to policy-making was like that of North Korea's Kim Il-sung.

The MP said modern political parties communicated through the media, not the membership, and only "paid lip-service to member power. In reality, members, trade unions, branches, councillors and the rest are bit-part players in Tony's power game." He meant it as a bitter compliment.

Mr Blair responded on BBC Radio: "I do listen. It's very important to listen. But it's also important to lead." Discussion of his leadership style was "a bit of a sterile debate, frankly".

But he conceded that the pace of change in the party had been great: "People get worried from time to time. They think it's got a bit too heavy. But the divisions aren't the same as in the Conservative party. Their divisions are seismic, they run right to the heart of the Conservative party, and they are divisions on policy. There is no great division on policy [in the Labour Party]."

Mr Mitchell, MP for Great Grimsby since 1977, later recanted his language but, as with Clare Short's "dark forces" interview, it was a gift for Tory propagandists.

At Broughton, in north Wales, Mr Blair said he was trying to create a party "in tune with modern times," an aim Mr Mitchell's article had conceded, albeit grudgingly. Mr Blair said: "Whenever you give leadership, whenever you give a strong sense of direction, there is bound to be some internal disagreement.

"But the vast majority of people in the Labour party know that it is right that we have got a modernised Labour party capable of taking Britain through to the 21st century and that we should not have to have a choice between a Conservative party that is bankrupt of ideas, tired, run out of steam, and a Labour party that wants to switch the clock back."

Court backs Howard on prisons fiasco

Alan Travis

THE "great escape" of 537 inmates let out last week by the Prison Service on a technicality about time spent on remand should never have happened, the High Court ruled last week.

Two High Court judges backed the decision by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, to halt the early release programme sanctioned by the Prison Service on the advice of a Home Office lawyer.

Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Popplewell threw out the test case brought by John Naughton, aged 32, a prisoner serving two consecutive 18-month sentences for possessing cannabis and burglary at Lindholme prison, near Doncaster. They dismissed his argument that prisoners serving multiple sentences should have the time spent on remand deducted from each sentence.

Mr Naughton is among 400 other prisoners who would have qualified for immediate release under the now discredited new guidelines on calculating sentences.

The prisoner's action rescued Mr Howard from the nightmare prospect of releasing a further 4,000 inmates in the coming months and a compensation bill running into tens of millions of pounds.

John Boddington, Prison Officers' Association chairman, said: "Once again the Prison Service has been brought into disrepute."

Mr Naughton had spent nearly a year in prison on remand waiting for his trial in November 1995 for the two separate offences and his lawyer, Peter Weatherby, argued that he should have that time deducted from each of his 18-month sentences and should have been released eight months ago.

But Mr Justice Popplewell said the argument was "totally absurd". It would mean that one defendant given a 12-month sentence for each of 10 offences of burglary to run consecutively would walk free if he had already spent a year in custody on remand. However, a co-defendant who had been out on bail while waiting for the trial would face 10 years inside.

For the Home Secretary, David Pannick QC said it was bizarre to argue that time spent in prison awaiting trial should count more than once for multiple offenders.

The two High Court judges said they would publish their detailed reasons this week.

The Home Secretary had been forced to announce that 537 inmates had been freed, six times more than the original figure of 86. Mr Howard admitted that it would not be possible to return any of the released prisoners to jail.

He said he was told of the latest blunder only after he called in the director-general of the Prison Service, Richard Tilt, to demand an explanation of the events.

At no stage was Mr Tilt's resignation offered or asked for, but he took responsibility for the fiasco, accepting that the whole matter had "been gravely mishandled".

The director-general stressed that ministers had not been informed about the early releases of inmates until after they had started. Nor were ministers aware of the numbers involved. It was the Prison Service that had failed to appreciate the scale of the problem, he said.

The lawyer whose advice triggered the mistaken releases was named as Stephen Parker, an in-house Home Office barrister.

Mr Parker, who advises on the legality of government policy, gambling, employment law and fire precautions, as well as prison matters, is said to be on holiday.

Tony Blair with actress Liz Dawn, who plays Vera Duckworth, landlady of the Rover's Return
PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

Labour seeks Street-cred

David Ward

THE story so far: Jack and Vera Duckworth have come into money and bought the Rover's Return but keep dipping their hands in the till when the other isn't looking.

Scene one: a minion sweeps away cigarette ends from the cobbles on the set of Coronation Street in Manchester while blazered minions pin the public behind iron barriers. Enter a stranger with a big grin and undemonic eyes. It is Tony Blair, who has come to embrace his people, street by street, beginning with the thoroughfare he dubs the most famous in Britain.

A voice in the crowd: "He looks nicer than he does on the telly."

Scene two: Enter a stage-hand with a tray bearing two pints and two port and lemons. [Looking at beer]: "It's not real, you know."

Blair removes jacket to look like man of the people.

A photographer: "Go on Vera, give him a kiss."

Vera obliges lubriciously.

Cut to crowd. Peter Somerville, a bystander: "They should send flaming Tony Blair here at 12 o'clock at night when there's no one else here. This is ridiculous. I've come 200 miles to see Coronation Street, or at least my wife has. I've got a coach to catch at half past four. Ridiculous."

Scene four: Mr Blair grins, meets the media. "To see people you have seen for years and years on television was fantastic."

A reporter [investigatively]: "Do you watch Corrie?"

Mr Blair [carefully]: "I was just saying to Vera, Liz I should say, that I usually don't get home in time to watch it. My kids actually watch it a lot."

Drug dealers freed early

Duncan Campbell

THE Home Secretary came under fire this week for an extraordinary deal that allowed two heroin dealers to be freed from prison 11 months after being jailed for 18 years. Considerable efforts had been made to suppress the story, which was briefly broadcast last month on television but taken off the airwaves after pressure from the Home Office.

John Haase, aged 46, and Paul Bennett, aged 32, two Liverpool drug dealers jailed in August last year for a heroin-smuggling conspiracy, were freed in July. Both had agreed to give information secretly to Customs and Excise about other dealers and the ownership of firearms in the Liverpool area.

Since they re-emerged on to the streets of Liverpool, the two have been pretending to former colleagues that they had been released because of an "abuse of process", a technicality that had allowed them out early. They are now on holiday.

Michael Howard defended his decision to release the men by saying that the trial judge, Judge David Lynch, had written to him specifically requesting that the sentence be reduced and the men freed.

The judge had said that to sentence the men to five years — the average tariff for a heavily involved supergrass in a trial of this kind — would have made it clear that they had informed and would have put their lives in danger.

Mr Howard said: "I acted at the specific request of the trial judge ... This was a wholly exceptional case ... I was faced with a specific request from the judge and, frankly, it was inconceivable that I could have ignored it."

The arrest of the two men along with six others, including five Turks, was regarded as a coup for Customs and Excise.

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Hijackers feared Saddam's revenge

Guardian Reporters

SIX WOMEN travelling with the men who hijacked a Sudanese airliner and forced the pilot to fly to Britain have told UK immigration authorities that they, their children and their relatives in Iraq face certain death if they are sent back.

Police said this week that the women were so distraught at the prospect of being forcibly returned that at least two have said they are willing to be separated from their husbands if necessary. During distressing scenes, it was said that another of the women, in her 30s, had threatened to kill herself if attempts were made to deport her.

The Sudan Airways jet, which was hijacked on Monday last week, took off from Stansted airport, Essex, on Thursday night bound for Khartoum via Jordan with 150 passengers on board and the original crew on the flight deck.

Seven Iraqi men appeared at Harlow magistrates at the weekend charged with the hijacking. The men, who had been questioned at Harlow police station, were charged under the Aviation Securities Act 1982.

During questioning, the women, who had two children with them, disclosed that the plan to take over the plane was made only a few hours before the flight was due to leave. They have all said there was never any intention of harming their fellow passengers or the crew, and that the action had been planned because the men had been called back to Iraq from Sudan in mysterious circumstances. The men were working as contract employees and had months of their contract to run.

Police say they have no plan to charge any of the women but they are being detained under the Immigration Act at an undisclosed location in Essex.

One woman said the men feared that a relative of one of them had been identified as a member of a political group opposed to the regime of Saddam Hussein. The man is said to have disappeared from his home in the past three weeks and his friends in Baghdad fear he has been murdered. Others in the group thought they might be being called back because someone had connected them with an anti-Saddam organisation within Sudan itself.

Immigration officials understand that several of the male hijackers are related and most believed that they were being taken back to Baghdad as part of the Iraqi government's policy of taking action against all those with any connection with dissidents.

Police said the women had been in tears on their arrest. Their first words when an interpreter had been found was to ask for mercy and to be allowed to remain in Britain. "Since that time they have continued to plead to be allowed to stay here. They say that if they are sent back they will be murdered within hours and that members of their families, including parents and other young relatives, will meet the same fate."

While maintaining the asylum applications of the hijackers would be treated no differently from any others received, the Home Office emphasised that their arrival by criminal means would be taken into consideration. There were indications this meant they would be prosecuted and jailed, then allowed to remain.

Even if the hijackers failed to prove "a well-founded fear of persecution" because of race or politics if they returned home, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, could grant them and their families exceptional leave to remain. Britain has granted refugee status to 1,325 Iraqis since 1992, and exceptional leave to remain to a further 1,905. The hijackers appear to be banking on Britain's unwillingness to turn its back on opponents of Saddam.

But David Howell, chairman of the foreign affairs select committee, insisted the hijackers be returned to Sudan. Permission to remain would make Britain seem a soft touch for terrorists.

Mr Howell commented: "If the word gets round that the quick way to asylum is three years in jail and then you're out, and in the country where you wanted to get to, that would be absolutely disastrous to the whole policy towards asylum seekers."

Comment, page 12

Malaria drug in the dock

Chris Mihill

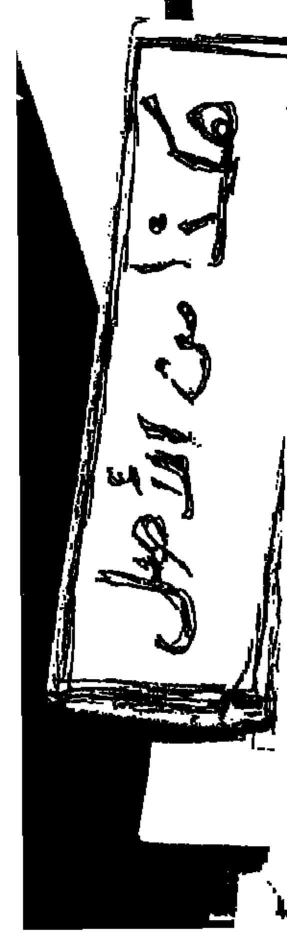
PEOPLE hoping to sue a pharmaceutical company on the grounds that its malaria drug can cause disturbing psychiatric symptoms were given fresh ammunition last week by a report saying it causes more problems than rival products.

Plans for legal action are being co-ordinated for more than 500 people by a firm of Bristol lawyers. They allege they were given insufficient warning that the drug, mefloquine, sold under the name Lariam and recommended for travellers to East Africa, could cause hallucinations, nightmares, dizziness, depression, and anxiety for some people. Roche, the manufacturers, says the drug causes serious mental symptoms in only one in 10,000 users. But doctors say the figure is one in 140.

The Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad, based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, questioned 1,214 adults who took mefloquine and 1,181 who took chloroquine plus proguanil, two other malaria drugs.

The doctors say in the British Medical Journal that, overall, complaints were rare in both groups, but "disabling neuropsychiatric adverse effects" were reported by one person in 140 for mefloquine, compared with one in 1,100 for the other group.

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Sharks swimming in Kurdish waters

THE KURDISH crisis is an ancient tale brought alarmingly up to date along the most dangerous faultline of the Middle East. It demonstrates both the failure of the international community to answer the questions left by the Gulf war, and the capacity of the Kurdish liberation movement for being its own worst enemy. In spite of their clear identity the Kurds have been less successful in achieving recognition than any other minority of comparable size. They have also exhibited an unhappy facility for supping with the devil. Saddam Hussein's interest in putting Bill Clinton on the spot, and easing Baghdad back into northern Iraq, is clear enough. But he is profiting from a situation which only arises because of mistakes elsewhere.

The external source of this crisis stems from Iran's attempt to take advantage of Iraqi weakness, and to challenge the United States, in the Kurdish zone. But it started with a new round of factional fighting between the two main groupings, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) led by Massoud Barzani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) under Jalal Talabani. Iran has given military support to the PUK's offensive, although less apparently to improve Mr Talabani's position than to strengthen its own diplomatic hand, offering its good offices (at Washington's expense) to reconcile the rival Kurdish factions.

The dilemma for the West and particularly the US is obvious. Just when alarm sirens have been sounding in Washington against the extension of Iranian influence, another shark is sighted in Kurdish waters. The prospect of Saddam's troops settling scores with dissidents who fled to northern Iraq is horrendous. Yet the no-fly zone established by the Allies above the 36th parallel does not rule out Iraqi troop movements — nor is it endorsed by the Security Council. UN Resolution 688, demanding that Saddam Hussein respect the human and political rights of all his country's citizens, does not invoke means for enforcement.

The Gulf war left Iraq in a limbo which the Allies have been unwilling or unable to resolve. Saddam remains there, whether because he has proved too cunning to remove or because, deep down, the Allies prefer him as a bulwark against the unknown (and Iran). History apart, any analysis of the current crisis ends up with the embarrassing fact that the Iraqis were invited in by one of "our" Kurds.

Now Saddam has posed a new dilemma: if he does not push his advantage too far, then the US and its allies would probably prefer to let matters slide. But with a presidential election looming, inaction may be too damaging. Whether or not it changes anything, a target will have to be found.

The politics of hijacking

THE CRIME of hijacking has been fiercely denounced over the years by many governments, including Britain. One should not, it is said, give in to hijackers' demands or offer concessions which might encourage others to try the same path. The demand of the Iraqis who hijacked the Sudan Air Airbus and have now been charged by police might not appear to pose an immediate problem. They were more than willing to surrender to British justice on British soil, and presumably were aware that this could lead to prosecution and a possible jail sentence. They were not asking for anything immediately in return. Yet any eventual granting of political asylum would still reward their original action; the issue does not go away just because it is postponed.

It is right to rule out returning the hijackers to Sudan. Britain has no extradition treaty with Khartoum, and there is serious doubt as to whether they would be dealt with by proper legal process — or simply be passed on to Baghdad for a more summary and extreme verdict. But this does not dispose of the dilemma which they now present. The Home Secretary could, in theory, announce, as a general principle, that anyone convicted in a British court of hijacking will not succeed in a subsequent application for asylum. But this would be contrary to natural justice and prevent the examination of such applications on their merits, which the principle of asylum requires.

Is it sufficient to argue that Iraq is such an extreme case that anyone seeking to leave or avoid returning there, by whatever means, is entitled to lenient treatment? Many would so argue on the grounds that these individuals, whatever the merits of their case, have now identified themselves so clearly as opponents of Saddam Hussein that they will face instant death if they ever return home. This may be true, yet it risks establishing a bizarre principle that an attention-grabbing crime is more likely to win entitlement to asylum than a quiet arrival. It also raises difficult questions of hierarchy. Opponents of the regimes of Saudi Arabia or China or Indonesia or Nigeria, and a number of other dubious regimes, should also expect to be waved through in the same manner — but we know that the present British government treats some of these very differently.

The answer to this unfairness is to cast the net wider rather than discriminate between the victims of Britain's totalitarian friends and foes. But that does not dispose of the particular issue of hijacking. Next month or next year, another such incident could occur with a less peaceful result; another in-flight struggle with a security officer, for example, could lead to weapons being fired and death for all on board. Might we not then conclude that this incident should have been handled more toughly?

These are all self-evidently difficult questions with no easy solution. The only firm ground on which to stand is that of the law. Those against whom there is sufficient evidence of participation in hijacking should be duly charged. Asylum is a different matter, and is subject to the provisions of the 1951 Geneva Convention. This excludes anyone who has committed "a serious non-political crime outside the country of refuge prior to his admission to that country as a refugee". Does that apply to those who hijacked the Sudan Air Airbus? Their cases remain to be argued. In the meantime no one should encourage expectations that an application for asylum, in these or similar circumstances, would necessarily gain a favourable answer.

Justice must be seen to be done

SENTENCING drug dealers to 18 years but letting them out after three is a dangerous new approach to an old trick. But who would have thought Michael Howard — particularly given his hardline campaign for honesty in sentencing — would have fallen for it? There is a well established tradition of offering deals to underworld figures who are ready to help convict their accomplices — turning Queen's evidence as it used to be known in the trade. But now the ultimate cynical deal has been exposed: two Liverpool drugs dealers sentenced to 18 years were freed by the Home Secretary after three years on the urging of the trial judge. According to Mr Howard, the judge felt unable to pass a reduced sentence for fear of acknowledging their co-operation, endangering their lives, and jeopardising further investigations.

If Mr Howard's account is true, the judge has erred in principle. There could hardly be a more dishonest example of sentencing. It has not just brought shame on the criminal justice system but further eroded its most important underpinning: public trust. Should Mr Howard have gone along with the deal? Of course not. He should have known he would be found out. Is he right in suggesting that he had no other option — ignoring the judge's advice would have been "inconceivable"? Of course not. Mr Howard has been ignoring judicial advice from the moment he was over promoted to Home Secretary three years ago.

So what should he have done? Played straight with the public. If the two dealers have given invaluable information to police and customs, then they do deserve a reduction to their sentence, although not as large as they got. But it has to be done openly. That is what the criminal justice system was designed to achieve: justice being seen to be done. That means using safe houses for informants. It means testing the accuracy of their information. And it means appointing senior minders to supervise supergrasses. None of this seems to have been done. The criminal justice system cannot be turned into an open market for information — particularly when the public is unable to gauge the quality of the information provided. It is time the whole process was tightened up, made more accountable and more public. The current deal just pollutes the system.

Thread to knit Bosnia together unravels

Julian Borger

WITH less than a week to go before Bosnia votes, the international monitors, media analysts and film crews have been arriving at Sarajevo's newly reopened airport, ready for the world's latest experiment in exotic democracy. But they may all have arrived too late.

The most important results of the election have already been decided. The internationally sponsored vote on September 14 will entrench and legitimise the carve-up of Bosnia, which has continued apace this year despite the presence of 60,000 peacekeeping troops.

The rate of ethnic cleansing has actually increased since the war ended. The process began just days after the Nato-led peace Implementation Force (I-For) arrived, when 60,000 Serbs were ordered by their self-appointed leaders to abandon their homes in Sarajevo. Many would have stayed if they had felt they could rely on the international community for their safety, but until the last days of the exodus, I-For remained aloof, describing the crisis as a "civil policing problem".

Later in the year, rival mobs were deployed to prevent refugees from returning home across the ethnic boundary lines. I-For, initially deployed with only a handful of military police, found itself once more ill-equipped to intervene.

The final phase in the process took place over the past three months, once again under international supervision. Serb and Croat separatists used a loophole in the Dayton peace agreement to exploit vote registration to their own ends.

Dayton envisaged that most Bosnians would return to their pre-war homes to vote. Its architects hoped that in that way the elections would help knit the country back together. But the agreement allowed voters to change their place of registration if they completed an appropriate form. With varying degrees of intimidation and fraud, the separatist leaders persuaded some 250,000 Serb and Croat refugees to sever their ties with their pre-war homes and vote instead in their "ethnic homelands".

In an attempt to limit the impact of this peculiarly Bosnian form of election rigging, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), in its role as election umpire, has postponed the municipal vote, probably until late November. This cuts away the most tainted part of the elections. The manipulation was aimed at a handful of target towns like Srebrenica, Zvornik and Brcko whose Muslim residents had been driven out in the war. Packing them with Serbs was aimed at finishing the job — the continuation of ethnic cleansing by other means.

But the postponement of the local poll is only a quick and partial fix. The registration fiasco taints the whole elections. Serbs who might have voted within the federation will instead reinforce the ethnically-based vote in the Serb republic.

Bosnians will vote, not necessarily in their original homes, but in ethnically-cleansed proto-states. Voter registration, intended as a step in a nation-building exercise, has instead served to sharpen the three-way partition of the country. The enclaves which muddied the picture and might have necessitated multi-ethnic forms of government have been virtually eliminated. Now the separatists, having consolidated their position in the national vote, will be in a better position to influence the municipal vote in a few months' time.

The elections on September 14 will take place when this new ethnic map has almost been completed. It comes in three detachable sections: Muslim, Croat and Serb. The elections will fix the bright primary colours of the new map and give a veneer of democratic respectability to the ethnic cleansers. The veneer will be particularly thin and cheap. The elections are being forced through before there is any evidence that they will reflect the considered will of the people. Television and radio, particularly in Serb and Croat areas, are shrill megaphones for the ruling nationalist parties, the SDS and HDZ respectively.

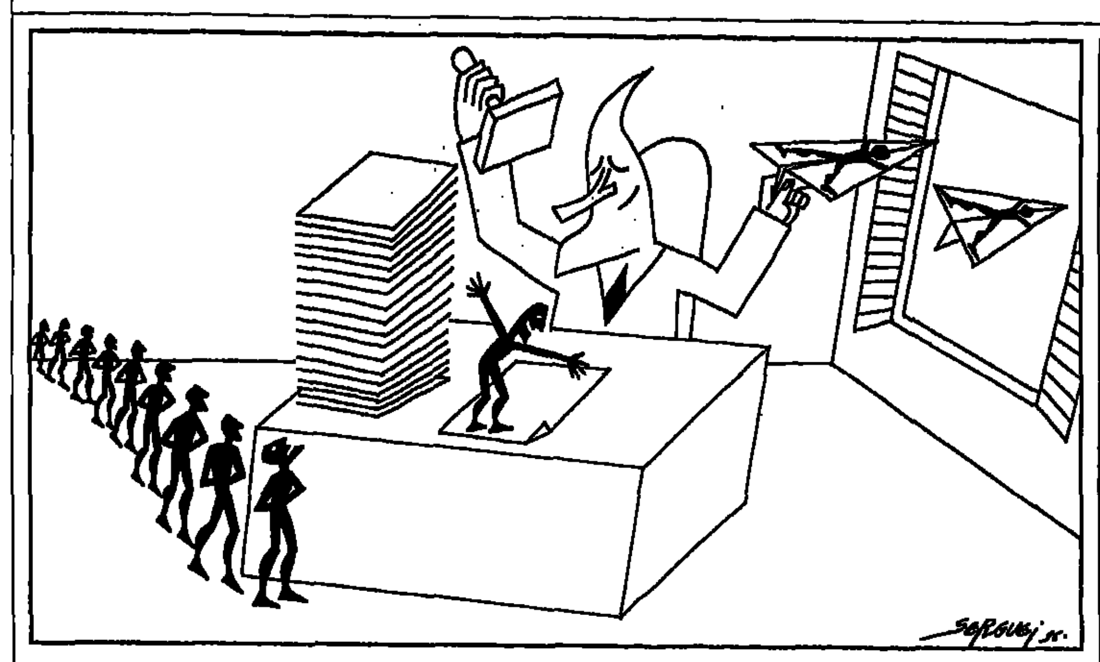
They and the Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA) all have tight control in their respective fiefdoms over the police, who have either stood by while dissidents have been heckled and beaten, or have actually joined in the harassment. In each community opposition candidates have been bullied out of their jobs. On one recent occasion the police in the Serb-held town of Teslic surrounded an opposition candidate in his workplace and besieged him and his supporters until he agreed to resign. The UN police were forced, by their restricted mandate, to stand by and watch. This use of force is probably unnecessary: the boss-client relationship between politician and voter has survived from socialism and has even been intensified by the war, especially among Bosnia's 2 million refugees.

MANY Muslim liberals who would, by political instinct, vote for the opposition presidential candidate, Haris Silajdzic, have decided to back the SDA incumbent, Alija Izetbegovic. Their fear is that a split Muslim vote will hand the chairmanship of Bosnia's joint presidency to the Serb master ethnic-cleanser, Momcilo Krajisnik. This would surely be the supreme irony of the "transition to democracy" — a man who has spent the war trying to destroy Bosnia would emerge as its head of state.

Any doubts over the nationalists' complete control of their electorates were dispelled by the June local elections in Mostar. The SDA and the HDZ swept the board. A competing mixed list of candidates from both Muslim and Croat communities won only 3 per cent of the vote.

The International Crisis Group (ICG), one of the independent pressure groups monitoring the implementation of the Dayton accord, called last month for the elections to be postponed in their entirety. The ICG pointed out that none of the main conditions for reasonably fair elections had been fulfilled and warned: "The vote may well accomplish with the ballot that ethnic cleansing which was not completed with the bullet." But barring a major outbreak of violence, the elections will go ahead for the same reason they were scheduled for September in the first place — to be out of the way by the time of the US presidential elections in November.

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September 8 1996



Chirac takes sharp turn to right

EDITORIAL

AT THE August 25 press conference he gave at his Côte-d'Azur summer residence, President Jacques Chirac attempted to justify his decision two days earlier to send in police to dislodge a group of 300 African illegal immigrants — or *sans-papiers* — from the Paris church of St Bernard: "Overall, the French are increasingly irritated by immigrants," he surmised.

Even if that reaction was, as he himself put it, "irrational and often unfair", Chirac's show of "firmness on the immigration issue" pandered precisely to the latent xenophobia of the French.

It is neither here nor there that, after the police intervention, the subsequent instalment of the *sans-papiers* saga showed just how ineffectual, in practical terms, Chirac's attempt to exploit the immigration issue had been.

The legal marathon of last weekend, which ended with the release from police custody of most of the Africans dislodged from St Bernard Church even though only a few of them had been given legal status, confirmed the point the group of mediators had been making over the previous five months: that the law is itself contradictory.

But that matters little to Chirac, in so far as immigration is, in this particular case, no more than one of several ingredients of domestic policy: his show of firmness was aimed at bolstering support for him among the rightwing, and even the far-right, electorate.

It was a successful ploy, to judge from an opinion poll commissioned by Le Monde and the radio station RTL, which shows that Chirac took the calculated risk of being seen as "insensitive" and "intransigent" in order to show clearly where he stood to his traditional constituency, where the rhetoric of law and order has always paid off.

In this respect, the case of the *sans-papiers* marks an abrupt U-turn in Chirac's presidency that is in some respects comparable to the sudden switch to economic and social austerity last autumn.

Only a year and a half ago, during the run-up to the presidential elections, the catch-phrase "anything rather than Balladur" somehow caught on in some leftwing circles. To them, the then prime minister, Edouard Balladur, who was also running for the presidency, was the embodiment of the arrogant, unpopular right, while Chirac was credited with having shifted his ground on social issues and adopted a more progressive and humanist stance.

It even got to the point where some former standard-bearers of the pro-Mitterrand left, such as the couturier Pierre Bergé and the television talk-show host Frédéric Mitterrand (the president's nephew), announced they were going to vote for Chirac.

The deliberate ambiguity of Chirac's position is now a thing of the past. After the wave of demonstrations and strikes last December, the St Bernard affair comes as further proof that the government has lurched to the right, while the left has rediscovered some of the traditional socialist values that had been eroded by its many years in power.

Chirac's shift to the right was also evident in remarks he made on another major issue he discussed with the prime minister, Alain Juppé, last weekend: the economy.

However much Chirac tries to rationalise his budgetary policy by dividing it up into four phases — first "stopping", then "stabilising the deficits", limiting "spending", and "lowering tax and social security contributions" — the end result of such zigzags is bound to be a return to financial orthodoxy. And that orthodoxy will need to be all the more stringent because money has to come from somewhere to pay for the spending spree of Chirac's first months in office.

Chirac answers the gloom merchants by announcing blithely that "we've got over the hump". One suspects that the person he is trying hardest to convince is himself. When a regime falls back on to its traditional electorate instead of showing signs of openness, it usually means it is bracing itself for difficult times ahead. Chirac's new stance is symptomatic of weak government.

(August 27)

Nepalese girls caught up in sexual slavery

Jean-Pierre Langellier
in Kathmandu

THE SIX prisoners (four men and two women) looked as if ghee would not melt in their mouths as they politely answered questions from the district administrator. Yet they had been charged with that most heinous of crimes — selling young girls into sexual slavery and thereby dooming them, more often than not, to Aids and an early death. They all denied the charges, claiming they had been the victims of a misunderstanding or even revenge.

Of the 100,000-odd Nepalese women who work as prostitutes in India, 20 per cent are estimated by local non-governmental organisations to be under 16.

In the brothels of Bombay and Kathmandu Valley three out of four girls have one child or more. They often deliberately become mothers because a baby is their only solace and source of affection.

One thing is virtually certain: the "slave" girls are getting younger and younger. The trend is partly due to a widespread fallacy in Asia that young girls do not get Aids (whereas in fact they are particularly vulnerable to the disease) and that sexual relations with them have curative properties.

Indians are particularly partial to Nepalese women: they are light-skinned, docile, honest and mainly Hindu, an advantage in Bombay, which is governed by an ultra-nationalist Hindu coalition.

Child prostitution results from a combination of historical, economic, political and cultural factors, in particular caste prejudice. Nepal, whose population of 20 million has been doubling every 25 years, is one of the poorest countries in the world. Forty per cent of the population live below subsistence level, and 50 per cent are unemployed. Many young people are forced or tempted to leave their villages because of poverty.

According to an ancient tradition, some of the lower castes living in western Nepal used to supply princes with musicians, dancers and prostitutes. Girls were sold to wealthy families that later offered them up to Hindu deities. In order to survive in the temples, which they shared with other offerings such as goats and buffaloes, they had no choice but to prostitute themselves.

Today the whole of Nepal has become one huge reservoir for pimps, and child prostitution is no longer restricted to the same castes, regions or ethnic groups as it was in the past. But its main cause remains the same: the deep contempt in which girls are held in a highly patriarchal society.

Baby girls are unwelcome. Nepal holds the world record for "male preference": 90 per cent of parents want at least two male children, first to keep the patronym alive, and secondly to conduct funeral rites, which is a male privilege.

Women are discriminated against not only in their daily lives; but also in legal texts, of which at least 20 put them at a disadvantage. Nepal is one of three countries in the world where the life expectancy of men is higher than that of women.

In secondary education, the ratio of girls to boys is only one to three. They do not "belong" to the family home, but to their future husbands, which means they have no inheritance rights. And their suicide rate is much higher than men's.

Many young women get a raw deal even before they fall into the clutches of "slave" traders. As children they will often have been victims of rape or incest. Some are child brides who are beaten by their husbands. Others are single mothers abandoned by society.

Most girls are sold by parents, brothers, husbands, neighbours or family friends when times are hard, such as the period between two harvests. It is a highly organised and lucrative trade.

The innocent, nimble-fingered peasant girls who work a 12-hour day at carpet factories in Kathmandu Valley may also be accosted after work by apparently caring strangers — women or couples — who paint an enticing picture of an easy life in Bombay. One false step, and they will be trapped for the rest of their short lives.

Once drugged, they are easily taken across the border into India, often under a false identity (no visa is required). They are bought by Bombay brothel owners for $500-$1,500. The younger they are, the higher the price on their heads.

Some of the girls who are still virgins are sold at specialised undercover auctions in Bombay or Hyderabad to oil-rich Arabs, who escort them back to their luxury hotel rooms, rape them and, sometimes, take them back to the Gulf. But the concubines Arabs really prefer are girls from Bangladesh: they are Muslims.

(August 28)

Former fan turns on Radio 101

Rémy Ourdan in Zagreb

IN THE days when the Croatian president, Franjo Tudjman, was an opponent of Yugoslavia's communist regime, he had little chance to make his opinions known. After 20 years of underground campaigning for the Croat cause, he finally managed to find a mouthpiece in the late eighties — Radio 101, a Zagreb-based FM radio station.

Now, after five years at the helm of an independent Croatia, Tudjman is trying to close down Radio 101, even though it has remained just as independent of the government as it was when it started up in 1984.

Almost all the ultranationalists who now govern Croatia made their first public pronouncements on Radio 101 when they were still obscure political trouble-makers under a communist regime.

The head of the station, Zeljko Matic, says: "We were also the first to talk about freedom of worship at a time when it was forbidden to wish listeners a Happy Christmas." Today, the fervent Catholics of Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), who have brought the national media to heel, are unhappy with Radio 101's no-holds-barred style.

The Council of Europe recently ordered Croatia to stop harassing its few independent media. Apart from TV and most of the daily press, on which the government keeps close tabs, plus a few sensationalist magazines that specialise in untruths, only one daily paper, Novi List, one satirical weekly, Feral Tribune, and Radio 101 provide a breath of fresh air.

The public is in no doubt as to which kind of fare it prefers: in Zagreb, Radio 101 is easily the most popular radio station, with a 32 per cent audience rating, as compared with the state radio's 17 per cent.

"The government probably doesn't dare close us down," says Matic. "But it's trying to cripple us financially with discriminatory taxes."

It has also, Matic says with a broad grin, reduced the power of Radio 101's transmitter "for environmental reasons", so as not to expose the people of Zagreb to "radiation".

"The present government has the same attitude to free broadcasting as the previous communist regime," he says. Radio 101 has agreed to conform to Croatian legislation on the media. But the law seems to vary according to the kind of programmes a station broadcasts.

Radio 101 gives priority to British and American music, not patriotic songs. And it also puts out political programmes where listeners can phone in and opponents of the regime can express their views. Indeed, HDZ members take part increasingly in Radio 101 debates since they do not want to be excluded from such a popular forum.

It is an open question whether Tudjman, whose authoritarianism becomes more blatant every day, will succeed in muzzling the radio that was once his friend. Whatever happens, Radio 101 is determined to keep fighting to the end.

(August 27)

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Rising to Liszt's challenge

Alain Lompech reviews two piano recitals at the Salzburg Festival

YEVGENY KISSIN looked tense and almost sullen as he scurried on to concert platform at the beginning of his August 13 recital at the Salzburg Festival and bowed to the audience with the stiffness of a Prussian officer.

The Moscow-born Kissin — whose mane of curly hair makes him look uncannily like Anton Rubinstein (1829-94), the Russian pianist and composer regarded in his time as being on a par with Franz Liszt — had already given a triumphant Chopin recital in Salzburg in 1994.

He is something of a phenomenon. In 1984 he made a spectacular musical debut at the age of 13 by recording in public the two Chopin concertos in the main hall of Moscow's Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Within a few weeks, some of the most illustrious pianists in the world had hailed him as a worthy colleague.

That admiration has not dimmed since then. When two pianists meet nowadays, they inevitably talk about Sviatoslav Richter ("Will he ever play again?"), Martha Argerich ("Will she return to the concert platform?") and Kissin ("Have you heard his latest disc?").

Kissin's race to get to the piano on August 13 was not that of a conquering hero. He knew that for the next two hours he was going to have live up to his reputation — and justify the advertising investment of his three record companies (Deutsche Grammophon, RCA and Sony).

He opened his recital with Ferruccio Busoni's celebrated transcription of Bach's D-minor Chaconne for solo violin. It is the least successful of the pianist-composer's numerous transcriptions and utterly betrays the spirit of the original by ignoring the musical line and the challenge Bach set the violin, an instrument that is essentially melodic, not polyphonic.

Though it is a pity Kissin did not play Brahms's transcription of the same work for the left hand, he did intelligently thin out the texture — Busoni uses too many octaves and dense chords — by registrating it exactly as if it had originally been written for organ.

He recalled the great recreative virtuosi in the way he orchestrated the piano and achieved a dynamic range that went from an almost imperceptible, but always resonant, pianissimo to the loudest — sometimes too loud — fortissimo.

The next piece Kissin played was in a completely different league. Schumann's C-major Fantasie is a perilous summit of musical literature whose difficulties defeat most pianists.

A magazine recently organised a blind comparison of 30 different recorded versions. The judges' verdict on most of the pianists was damning. Only Nelson Freire (1 CD Alphée), Martha Argerich (1 CD EMI) and Claudio Arrau (1 CD Philips) emerged with plaudits. Kissin's disc had not yet been issued. One wonders whether he would have joined the lucky trio.


Kissin: total fusion of pianist and music PHOTOGRAPH: ANTHONY CRICKMAY

At Salzburg, he was barred from entering the gates of the Schumann pianists' pantheon. Although his sound was magnificent, his style impressive and his fingerwork infallible, he overarticulated the melodic line. There was too much piano and not enough poetry: he allowed himself to be overwhelmed by an emotion which the listener had difficulty in sharing.

We were not allowed to forget his magnificent pianistic technique — though one suspects that Kissin may have tampered with the closing passage of the second movement so he could play it without fear of fluffing the top notes. But he played it so exaggeratedly fast that one could not clearly hear what he was doing, and the tension he had built up throughout the movement suddenly petered out.

THE ONLY remarkable thing about Kissin's interpretation of Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata was his absolute control of the piano's resonance in the first movement. His second movement was mannered, and he played the last so fast he was quite unable to bring out the harmonic value of the arpeggios.

On the other hand, the four Liszt studies that concluded the recital — Harmonies du Soir, Chasse Neige, Feux Follets and Wilde Jagd — took us into territory where few have successfully ventured. One wonders which other living pianists are capable of achieving such a degree of immateriality in these dauntingly difficult pieces: Argerich and Freire without any doubt, and possibly Ivo Pogorelich, always supposing he forgot to bask in self-admiration. Kissin's performance here had a transcendental quality that suggested a total fusion of the pianist and the music he was playing.

On August 21, Maurizio Pollini stalked on to the platform looking, as he often does, like a frightened bird. He opened his recital with Schumann's Allegro opus 8, probably not the composer's most inspired work. But it is a favourite with Pollini, as could be seen from the meticulous and impressively dignified way he handled its alternate bursts of lyricism and calmer passages.

His performance of Schumann's Fantasie differed from Kissin's in that his dynamic range was much more restricted, his playing more compact and his sound softer-edged. The tenderness and sheer beauty of his playing were driven by a deeply moving subjectivity. In his interpretation, the second movement did not sound as though it were just "a study in contrary motion", and the finale came across as a whisper.

Pollini gave a straightforward and honest performance which eschewed any of the effects that would have sent the audience into transports. That did not stop a bejewelled Italian woman from screaming "Bravo!" after each work — and also before the end of Chopin's "Funeral" Sonata, carrying some members of the audience with her and prompting a glance of utter despair from Pollini.

The Chopin sonata, his second, is a work which greatly taxes the pianist's deepest physical and psychological resources. On the few occasions when the composer agreed to perform it, he always vanished from view immediately afterwards.

In his performance of the work, Pollini drew on a wider dynamic range than he had in the Schumann Fantasie, but he used so much pedal in the first movement that the left hand could not be heard distinctly — which was a great pity.

Surprisingly, when he played the repeat in the first movement he started not from the *doppio movimento*, but from the opening *grave*, thus following a trend launched by a German professor. Both Vlado Perlemuter and Nikita Magaloff have gone on record as disagreeing with this practice.

Pollini nevertheless played the work in a truly inspired fashion, which meant one could forgive his overuse of pedal and considerable fluctuations in tempo during the funeral march.

(August 16 and 24)

Masterpieces go to ground as Japan's art bubble bursts

Philippe Pons in Tokyo

AT THE end of the eighties, during the "financial bubble" that triggered a feverish wave of speculation in Japan, wealthy businessmen paid through the nose for works by Vincent Van Gogh, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall and others. Many of the speculators have since gone bankrupt, and some 100 of their art treasures have been seized by their creditors, mostly banks and money-lenders.

"There are enough confiscated masterpieces, on top of thousands of less important works by painters like Utrillo and Dufy, to fill a small-scale Musée d'Orsay," says art critic Shinichi Segi. "I'm worried. Not only are they being kept from public view, but no one knows exactly where they are or, more importantly, at what temperature and degree of humidity they are being stored."

Segi puts the value of the paintings at $15 billion, or half the amount of money in circulation on the Japanese art market between 1987 and 1990. The works are 80 per cent western and 20 per cent traditional Japanese *nihonga*. Two thirds of the western pictures are by French painters, mostly Impressionists.

One work currently being withheld from the public is Picasso's Les Noces de Pierrette, which belongs to his "Blue" period. It was sold for $53 million by the French auction house Drouot-Montaigne in November 1989. The buyer was the Japanese speculator and property tycoon Tomonori Tsurumaki, who went bust two years later. The picture is now thought to be in the hands of his creditors, the credit company Leak, which is rumoured to want to put it on the market. But when contacted by Le Monde, the company denied it was in possession of Les Noces de Pierrette.

Even greater uncertainty surrounds the fate of other seized paintings, such as those once owned by the credit company Aichi Finance, which went bankrupt this year. Its managing director, Yasumichi Morishita, is one of the biggest swindlers on the market. He began his career as a money-lender and later became an unscrupulous corporate raider nicknamed "the Viper" in stock market circles.

Through his gallery, Aska International, Morishita — who had bought a large stake in Christie's International — also speculated in paintings in partnership with Tsurumaki (who had been his employee).

In 1989 he bought two other Picassos, La Maternité and Au Lapin Agile. Along with another gallery belonging to a large Toyota dealer in Nagoya, Masahiko Sawada (also now bankrupt), Aska invested some $1 billion in Impressionist paintings.

The frenzled speculation that swept Japan in the late eighties was manna from heaven to both Western and Japanese art dealers, who made colossal fortunes thanks to the system of "Japanese prices", which were much higher than world prices.

During the first half of the eighties, the turnover of the western art market in Japan was running at about $2 billion a year. From 1986 on, that figure rose five times. The signal for the beginning of the speculative craze for western paintings was the purchase by the insurance company Yasuda of Van Gogh's Sunflowers for $39.9 million in 1987.

By 1995, the turnover of the western art market had plummeted to 5 per cent of its 1990 value. And prices also took a tumble — paintings lost 20-30 per cent of their value compared with their purchase price during the period of speculation.

Van Gogh's Portrait du Docteur Gachet, which was bought in 1990 for $82.5 million by an eccentric paper manufacturer, Ryoei Saito, has now lost a third of its value. While he was at it, Saito acquired one of Renoir's versions of Le Moulin de la Galette. He said publicly that he would carry all his paintings to the grave. But he was persuaded otherwise by his creditors when his company went bust: after his death last March, his pictures ended up in a warehouse.

The only works now to be found for sale in Japan have little market value, but even their prices have slumped. A Picasso engraving, Le Repas du Pauvre, which was worth $410,000 in 1989, is valued at $86,000 today.

Art dealers are itching to put paintings back on the market, but their present owners — the failed businessmen's creditors — refuse to suffer further losses by letting them go for prices lower than their security value. There are also widespread fears that a massive release of confiscated paintings would cause the market to collapse.

As for Japanese collectors, they got their fingers burnt once and now no longer trust art dealers. Hiroya Tsukibara, director of the Tsubaki Gallery in Tokyo, feels dealers have now lost their credibility.

AND THEN there is the problem of fakes. There are thought to be many among the works purchased during the boom, and owners of paintings are ill-equipped to judge whether they are genuine or not. A group of 20 galleries has just begun selling paintings by auction in an attempt to instil greater trust among their clientèle.

"If there continue to be bankruptcies among credit companies, the banks may be forced to sell the pictures in their possession," says art critic Segi, who suggests that the culture authorities should set up a foundation to buy up the lost masterpieces and put them on show.

Major Japanese paintings have also been subject to speculation, though to a lesser extent, and some have suffered the same fate as their western counterparts. "On top of that, no one knows where they are, and that causes problems when people want to organise an exhibition," Segi says.

Creditors are pinning their hopes on local museums, which they think may be prepared to pay top prices for top paintings. But that is far from certain: taxpayers are against that policy, which they regard as "extravagant". Meanwhile the hijacked paintings remain invisible.

(August 20)

Le Monde
Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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The Washington Post

Zedillo Confronts New Rebel Threat

Molly Moore and John Ward Anderson in Mexico City

PRESIDENT Ernest Zedillo on Sunday denounced a new leftist guerrilla organization that launched attacks across southern Mexico last week as "terrorists" and vowed to pursue the rebels with "the full force of the law."

"We do not accept the appearance of groups that employ terrorism to murder, destroy and intimidate," Zedillo, his voice shaking, said in a declaration that drew a standing ovation and the only strong emotional response from members of the Congress during his annual state of the union address.

Zedillo, who had planned his speech as a glowing testimonial to what he deems an improving economic picture, instead had to confront a guerrilla uprising that analysts and political leaders say is more serious than the January 1, 1994, insurrection by Zapatista rebels in the southern state of Chiapas.

In the latest clash, the rebel group, which is calling for the overthrow of the government, attacked security forces in the southern Pacific coastal state of Oaxaca on Saturday, leaving one guerrilla dead. A total of 15 people, including police, military personnel, rebels and two civilians, died as a result of the well-coordinated clashes across southern Mexico, while 21 were injured.

Nationwide, security at strategic installations — government buildings, airports, main roads, telecommunications centers and power facilities — remained heavy, in recognition that the guerrilla group has attacked only government targets.

"Just when we are progressing toward real democracy . . . we will not accept the emergence of outdated and bloody incidents of violence," Zedillo said in his most extensive comments on the guerrillas since the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) appeared two months ago.

The group has since escalated the severity of its actions — starting with a symbolic demonstration at a memorial service for slain peasants, then moving to sporadic guerrilla attacks on military convoys, and culminating last week in coordinated strikes at a dozen government and military targets in four states.

Perhaps to hit the government in its pocketbook, the rebels have staged most of their strikes near Mexico's world-class beach resorts, which draw about $6 billion in annual tourist revenue — Mexico's third-highest source of foreign exchange. The group has not, however, targeted any tourist facilities, no visitors have been injured, and there has not yet been any obvious impact on tourism, although the high season does not begin for several months. However, news of the attacks sent the Mexican stock market plunging 75.94 points, or 2.2 percent.

The attacks, reported at seven locations in the southern coastal states of Oaxaca and Guerrero and in Mexico State near the capital, constituted a major escalation in a new insurgency that appears to have its roots at least partly in the widespread disparity between Mexico's haves and have-nots and the political disenfranchisement of the country's rural peasants.

Zedillo's government has consistently played down the significance and military strength of the EPR, which first surfaced publicly two months ago. But it now appears the group is better armed, better funded, more mobile and more widespread than previously realized. In the last two months, army troop movements, weapons cache discoveries and attacks on the military have been reported in at least seven of Mexico's 31 states, although no concrete evidence has surfaced connecting the incidents.

It seems the new guerrilla group, whose uniformed members are armed primarily with AK-47 assault rifles and cover their faces with brown scarves, is interested mostly in small-scale, lightning ambushes on government targets, such as the attacks that occurred on August 28.


A judicial policeman during a raid in Mexico City, part of the crackdown on the new rebels PHOTOGRAPH: DANIEL AGUILAR

Officials said the first incident occurred about 10pm in the town of Tlaxiaco, a mountain village about 60 miles west of Oaxaca, the capital of the state that goes by the same name. State officials said about 50 guerrillas armed with AK-47 assault rifles opened fire on a city hall, killing at least two police officers. Another officer was missing.

About two hours later, a series of attacks broke out against installations in the resort town of Huatulco, Mexico's newest and one of its most exclusive beach towns. State officials said 80 masked gunmen attacked the town plaza, a naval barracks, the offices of the federal prosecutor and a federal police station, killing at least nine people, including two guerrillas.

Meanwhile, two attacks were underway north of Oaxaca in Guerrero state, home to the resort of Acapulco. State officials said one police officer was killed and two officers and two soldiers were injured when guerrillas attacked the town police station of Tixtla, about 10 miles east of the state capital, Chilpancingo. At about the same time, six soldiers were injured when rebels attacked an army barracks in the city of Altamirano, state officials said.

ANC Takes Revenge on Holomisa

Lynne Duke in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA'S ruling party last week expelled a minister who revealed President Mandela had accepted a 1994 campaign donation from a businessman under investigation for bribery.

When Bantu Holomisa, 41, alleged in August that money had changed hands between Mandela and Sun International hotel magnate Sol Kerzner, the African National Congress denied the claim as "blatant lies." Mandela later admitted it was true but said the bribery case against Kerzner was unaffected by the donation. The case remains open.

The charge put Holomisa on a collision course with the ANC. His expulsion is the first high-level falling out within the ANC since it won a parliamentary majority in the first all-races election in 1994. Holomisa is believed to be grinding several political axes by publicly embarrassing the ANC, but his expulsion shows how far the party will close ranks when its integrity is questioned.

Holomisa, a former major-general, in 1987 took over Transkei, a black "homeland", in a coup and turned it into a platform for anti-apartheid activists, earning praise among the ANC rank and file. When the ANC took over government in 1994, Mandela made him deputy minister of environment and tourism, and he was elected to a high-level party committee. Then in May, Holomisa went before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is investigating crimes committed during apartheid, to testify about covert government attempts to destabilize Transkei. In the process, he repeated some scandal about Stella Sigcau, the Transkei leader he had overthrown in 1987, saying Sigcau, now public enterprises minister, had received part of a bribe allegedly paid to Transkei leaders in the 1980s by Kerzner, who wanted a casino license for the region. An inquiry cleared Sigcau.

Saddam Calls Clinton's Bluff Over Kurds

Jonathan C. Randal and John Mintz

BY CAPTURING a Kurdish city in a haven patrolled by U.S. and other international warplanes, Saddam Hussein has challenged President Clinton to respond. But any U.S. action risks drawing America further into a region troubled by Kurdish rivals' bitter feuds, meddling by powerful neighbors and countless betrayals of the Kurdish people's ancient nationalist longings.

The 22 million Kurdish people, mainly Sunni Muslims, are mostly spread across lands in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and form the world's largest ethnic group without a nation of its own.

The American-led air umbrella, created over Kurdish areas in northern Iraq after the 1991 Persian Gulf War, gave the Kurds their best shot at achieving autonomy in a half-century. But in December 1994, an old rivalry between the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) led by Massoud Barzani, and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led to a resumption of factional fighting that in the last 20 months has killed 4,000 of the 3.5 million Kurds in Iraq. It was a revival of this fighting that triggered the latest military confrontation, which culminated in last weekend's Iraqi capture of Irbil, the unofficial Kurdish capital.

The PUK has been accused by its rivals of accepting arms and other help from neighboring Iran. The PUK has denied it, but the charge makes it harder for the United States to intervene on the PUK's behalf.

Meanwhile, Barzani's KDP is aligned with Saddam, having, incredibly, invited his troops into the Kurdish area of Iraq — in the 1980s, the Iraqi leader gassed, uprooted and assassinated Kurdish civilians by the tens of thousands. Tariq Aziz, Iraq's deputy prime minister, embarrassed Barzani last Saturday by revealing the contents of a letter the KDP leader was said to have written to Saddam on August 22, seeking his military help. Aziz says Barzani addressed Saddam as "your excellency," and "pleaded" with him to "interfere to help us to ease the foreign threat" from Iran. Kurdish and U.N. sources in Irbil said Barzani's soldiers worked alongside Iraqi troops as they captured the city with little resistance from Talabani's PUK, and that they moved immediately into PUK offices there.

Kurdish activists and experts on the region feel the crisis could have been averted had the Clinton administration more forcefully denounced an Iranian incursion into the Kurdish area of Iraq several weeks ago and worked harder to broker an agreement between the factions.

"This is a result of us not taking a stronger position earlier this year," said Kathryn Porter, president of the Human Rights Alliance, a private Washington-based group trying to mediate among the Kurdish factions.

The United States has hosted repeated talks between the two sides, most recently in talks in London mediated by a State Department official. But Porter accused the State Department of coming up short, such as in its failure to secure $1 million to set up a mediation organization in Irbil.

To most Iraqi Kurds, Saddam is a butcher remembered for the gassing and wholesale destruction of Kurdish villages in the 1980s. After an unsuccessful uprising against Saddam at the end of the Gulf War, many Kurds fled north of the 36th parallel, which the United States and its allies established as a "no-fly" zone that Saddam's military aircraft were barred from entering.

The United States tried to broker a Kurdish peace, but it was broken in 1994 when the PUK became enraged that the KDP was not sharing revenue from illicit oil trade with Turkey. The PUK, which controls about 70 percent of the Iraqi Kurdish population, took over Irbil in that year.

American mediation conducted in Ireland and in Kurdistan in 1995 and early 1996 did little more than preserve a fragile cease-fire. The U.S.-financed Iraqi National Congress, a Kurdish-based opposition group designed to topple Saddam, withered.

Iran stepped into the virtual void in 1995. The PUK, deprived by the KDP of revenue and foreign access through Turkey, became more dependent on Iran. Recently, Iran was sufficiently emboldened to launch an incursion deep into Iraqi Kurdistan, ostensibly to close down the operations of Iranian Kurdish nationalists.

Diplomats and regional powers concluded that by doing so, Iran was thumbing its nose at Washington, and willing to promote further fighting among the Kurds. The KDP said the Iranians left behind arms, ammunition and other material with the PUK when they withdrew on July 29.

Fighting resumed on August 17, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the KDP by the revered nationalist leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani, father of its current leader.

Iraq's recapture of Irbil, in alliance with the KDP, looks set to solidify the territorial carve-up between the two Kurdish factions, leaving the KDP in control of Irbil and most of the land to the west — including the soon-to-be reopened oil pipeline to Turkey, and the PUK in charge of everything to the east.

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Sex Scandal Forces Top Aide to Quit

David Maraniss and Peter Baker in Chicago

DICK MORRIS abruptly resigned last week as President Clinton's top political adviser in the face of a tabloid story linking him to a high-priced call girl. The resignation of Clinton's longtime strategist rocked the Democratic convention at the most untimely possible moment, hours before the president's climactic speech accepting his party's nomination for a second term.

In a statement he worked out with Clinton aides before quietly slipping out of town, Morris said he resigned so that his predicament would not become a campaign issue. Of the tabloid allegations against him, he said: "I will not subject my wife, family or friends to the sadistic vitriol of yellow journalism. I will not dignify such journalism with a reply or an answer. I never will."

Clinton was informed of the resignation early on Thursday morning last week after his emissary, former White House aide Erskine Bowles, had spent much of the night in discussions with Morris in a Chicago hotel room. White House press secretary Michael McCurry would not say whether Morris privately confirmed or denied the allegations during his talks with Bowles, and he sought to dismiss the substance of the report as beneath discussion even though Clinton had accepted Morris's resignation.

The 48-year-old Morris began advising Clinton when he was a candidate for governor of Arkansas and was brought to the White House as a consultant after the Republican takeover of Congress in the 1994 elections. He is widely credited with engineering the president's political comeback since then by stressing centrist issues that set him apart from traditional Democratic liberalism. But Morris was a controversial figure within the White House who only recently had begun to move out of the shadows to take credit for the president's success. Ideologically ambidextrous, he doled out advice to candidates of both parties but always, in the end, viewed Clinton as his ticket to the big time.

Clinton issued a statement acknowledging Morris's importance to his career. He called Morris a friend who had done "invaluable work" for him.

It was Morris's role in shaping Clinton's message, rather than the scandal itself, that Republican presidential nominee Robert J. Dole emphasized last week.

"Morris has been trying to make President Clinton a Republican," Dole told reporters in California. "Now maybe he'll revert to the liberal Democrat he is." The allegations against Morris were due to appear in the Star, a weekly tabloid that four years ago published allegations by Gennifer Flowers that she conducted a long affair with Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas. The New York Post published an article on the Star allegations, and faxes of the story received wider distribution at the convention village in Chicago than any speech text or policy document.

The essence of the story is that Morris, who has a home in Connecticut but lives in the Jefferson Hotel while he is in Washington during the week, had been involved in a months-long relationship with a call girl named Sherry Rowlands. The 37-year-old Rowlands kept a diary of their alleged dalliance at the Jefferson and sold her story to the Star in two installments. She claimed, among other things, that Morris impressed her with inside stories about the White House and its occupants, showing her an early copy of Hillary Rodham Clinton's convention speech, and allowing Rowlands to listen on the phone as he talked to the president.

The Star tabloid said Rowlands approached it with her story and produced diary entries and telephone answering machine tapes.

Since Morris held no government security clearance or a permanent White House pass, officials said he could not have passed along national secrets during any pillow-talk and said that no further White House investigation is necessary.

Clinton As Man of Moderation

John F. Harris in Chicago

PRESIDENT CLINTON last week offered himself as a man of moderation, committed to protecting the popular big-government programs that were the pride of Democrats of an earlier era, but pledging to make his own mark with a more modest but forward-leaning agenda based on high-technology and education.

He accepted his party's nomination in a rousing, spirited speech and said he would mark his second term by giving "Americans the tools they need to make the most of their God-given potential." And he vowed to "never allow cuts that . . . pollute our environment, end the guarantee of health care under Medicaid, or violate our duty to our parents under Medicare."

It was a speech meant to outline Clinton's priorities if he were to become the first Democrat since Franklin D. Roosevelt to be re-elected president, and the themes of education, family, the future were constant markers.

A typical passage was one in which Clinton cited his recently unveiled programs to give a $1,500 tax cut to make two years of community college a universal entitlement, wiring all schools for computers, a new initiative aimed at ensuring that all children can read by the end of third grade and expanded training for those who lose their jobs or leave the welfare rolls.

"If we do these things," he said, "every 8-year-old will be able to read, every 12-year-old will be able to log on to the Internet and every 18-year-old will be able to go to college. And Americans will have the knowledge they need to cross that bridge to the future."

Clinton's speech was delivered in a loud, robust voice, and, with a frame that has recently shed 15 pounds or so, he cut a commanding figure from the podium at the United Center in Chicago. He was interrupted frequently by applause and chants of "four more years." In case anyone missed the allusion to Republican nominee Bob Dole's pledge last month to be a bridge to what he called a more noble American past, Clinton pointedly made his meaning plain. "With all respect," he said, "we do not need to build a bridge to the past, we need to build a bridge to the future."

He also responded bluntly to Dole on the question of tax cuts. He said a broad tax cut would lead to deep cuts, or deep deficits of the kind that he boasted the nation is just now escaping.

The speech heavily reflected the man who left Chicago shrouded in scandal, former political consultant Dick Morris. During the day, everyone at the convention hall was talking about Morris, but in the evening they were listening to him, whether they knew it or not.

But Clinton also had rhetoric that was a divergence from the Morris motif that Clinton should avoid linking himself explicitly with Democrats and their traditional agenda. Delegates cheered his appeal for diversity, including respect for homosexuals.

And Clinton said in the most direct language he has used so far that he needs a Democratic Congress to do the things he wants. Referring to a balanced budget, something Clinton said he wants even as he condemned Republican cuts, he bellowed: "We could have the right kind of balanced budget — with a new Congress. A Democratic Congress."

But several of the ideas Clinton offered probably could be achieved in a second term even without a Democratic majority. Dole, when he was still Senate Majority Leader, spoke favorably about the idea of giving tax credits for education. And Clinton's plan to cut back the capital gains tax for most people sell their homes is broadly consistent with Republican goals. Several times during the speech he evoked his own relatives, a subtle rejoinder to Republicans who consider themselves the defender of "family values."



Follow my leader . . . Clinton supporters dance the Macarena, led by Hillary Clinton, far right

Reeve Preaches Roosevelt Values From Wheelchair

OPINION
E.J. Dionne Jr.

THE BIG deal is not that Democrats shoved their politicians off center stage on their convention's first night and replaced them with nonpoliticians, including the actor Christopher Reeve.

The real news is that the nonpols, Reeve and Jim and Sarah Brady, delivered what will stand as among the most pointed *political* messages of this convention. They neither fuzzed up the issues nor shrank from their main points.

Reeve, paralyzed in a horse-riding accident last year, spoke slowly but resonantly. Motionless in his wheelchair, he moved not only the crowds but also the network television producers, who kept him on the air instead of cutting to their pollsters, commentators, reporters — or commercials.

His message was, as they say in the political trade, off-message: Democrats these days are not supposed to say that caring about the needy is a good thing. As Ann Lewis, now communications director for the Clinton campaign, said some years ago: "We used to talk about immunizing little children against disease. Now we call that 'investing in human capital.'"

Nor is it fashionable to quote the ultimate Old Democrat, Franklin D. Roosevelt. But there was Reeve doing both things at once. "President Roosevelt showed us that a man who could barely lift himself out of a wheelchair could still lift a nation out of despair," he said. "And I believe — and so does this administration — in the most important principle FDR taught us: America does not let its needy citizens fend for themselves."

Now this was not only pointed. It was also clever. Not leaving people to "fend for themselves" was an echo of the very next line Clinton spoke after he famously declared that the era of big government is over. On the surface, Reeve was faithfully supporting the administration. But he was also challenging the president to live up to his own principles on, say, welfare.

As for Jim and Sarah Brady, they are former Republicans who have helped convince Democrats not to run from gun control. The National Rifle Association will pulverize any candidate who favors even a smidgen of gun regulation. You win on this issue by joining the debate vigorously and convincing the majority that wants to restrict the most dangerous weapons to stand up.

The lesson of Reeve and the Bradys is that there is nothing in principle wrong with a little drama at convention time, and nothing wrong with the political parties trying to put on a show that will draw in the cameras and the viewers.

Of course conventions are, for the moment, devoid of any real decision-making authority and thus, largely, of "news." But the overall message of a convention — for example, the Republicans' decision to accentuate the moderate — *is* news. In any event, political parties get few enough chances to catch the public's eye. They have a right to make the most of it, even if they are occasionally guilty of bathos overload.

In the case of putting Reeve on the stage, I confess to having been queasy before the event. There seemed to be exploitation in it, the blatant use of the suffering of a paralyzed man to draw in viewers to a four-day political commercial.

I was wrong because of the way Reeve carried it off. This was not an exploited man. He had serious things to say and said them plainly.

In fact, the most controversial line in his speech ought to promote some argument. In defining "family values," Reeve said: "I think it means that we're all family, that we all have value. And if that's true, if America really is a family, then we have to recognize that many members of our family are hurting."

On one level, this is right. Using the family metaphor is a way of calling attention to mutual responsibility. But the national community is not a family. The very social engagement Reeve endorsed is difficult because it calls people beyond their obligations to their own families and asks them to help others they do not know and may not be like them. Alas, painting over this problem with the word "family" won't solve it.

But Reeve did what a good political speaker is supposed to do. He drew us into a serious debate. It turns out that it doesn't take a politician to raise a real issue.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 8 1996

Netanyahu Answers the Call of the Dead

Israel is being nudged back to its rigid past, writes **Glenn Frankel**

A FEW weeks ago Israel and the Hezbollah guerrilla movement staged a solemn and macabre prisoner exchange in which the corpses of two Israeli soldiers were delivered in return for the remains of more than 100 guerrillas. The deal involved Iran, Syria and Germany as well as Israel and Lebanon, took four months to negotiate and almost fell through at the last minute.

The exchange was hailed as a potential breakthrough in the brutal stalemate over the fate of southern Lebanon, where Israeli and Hezbollah forces have waged a long war of attrition. But it seemed to me that protracted discussions for the purpose of moving corpses across a border constituted the old Middle East at its worst. This was the Middle East I recalled from the 1980s, a region where the fundamental values were nationalism, tribal loyalty and the blood feud between Arab and Jew — a Middle East, in short, where the dead take precedence over the living.

I was The Washington Post's Jerusalem bureau chief from 1986 to 1989, a time of turmoil and upheaval for both Israelis and Palestinians, and I returned in 1992 to write a book about the vast changes taking place in both societies. Israel was undergoing a profound transformation from a small, collectivist, mobilized garrison-state to a more open, modern and bourgeois country at a time when most Palestinians, battered by 25 years of occupation, were prepared to come to terms with it. The Oslo peace accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization was part of a process of change that was giving birth — slowly, painfully but inevitably — to a new Middle East.

But the past has refused to go quietly. With the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish extremist, the renewal of the suicide bombing campaign against Israeli civilians by Palestinian militants and Israel's own bombing of Hezbollah and civilian targets in south Lebanon, the old Middle East has reasserted itself with a vengeance. And the surprise electoral victory of right-wing candidate Binyamin Netanyahu is further proof that Israelis are as frightened by the future as they are of the past.

Netanyahu, who at 46 is the first member of his generation to lead the country and the first prime minister to have been born in the modern state of Israel, is not the same sullen rejectionist as the last Likud prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir. But for all his rhetoric about peace and democracy and his invocation of Western values, the new prime minister is very much at home in the old Middle East. His premiership has already slipped into a quagmire of broken commitments and frustrated expectations, where the initiative no longer rests with moderates determined to defy their own history in the name of resolving their conflict, but rather with radicals out to reassert the past's remorseless control.

During my stay in the region, Netanyahu ventured to Washington, Cairo and Amman. An attractive and articulate politician, he looked at home in each capital and received tentative embraces from Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Hussein. But his most important Arab interlocutors are the ones he seems most loath to deal with: Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians.

So far Netanyahu is treating the Palestinians as if the Oslo accords had never happened. It's not that he is violating the accords; indeed, he affirms that his government is committed to honoring them and that it is the Palestinians who are committing most of the violations. But he is ignoring and undermining Oslo's deeper meaning. The accords were an acknowledgement by Israelis and Palestinians of each other's national existence and a forthright admission that neither could defeat the other. For Palestinians, the acknowledgement was straightforward: Israel had beaten them militarily. They settled because they had no other choice. Yasser Arafat was a virtual political corpse until the Oslo pact restored him to life.

For Israel the equation was more complex. Although it clearly had defeated the Palestinians militarily, it had not vanquished them. The five-year uprising or intifada showed that while Palestinians could never overcome Israel, they could make its life miserable. Because Israel could not expel Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, and because it could not find legitimate local leaders willing to forgo Palestinian national aspirations, it settled for Arafat. In short, Israelis came to the table because they had won the conflict, while Palestinians came because they had lost.

Netanyahu still thinks in terms of winners and losers, not partners. He is treating the Oslo accords as a weapon he can use to his advantage. Thus he has told lawmakers he will not implement Israeli troop redeployment in the West Bank city of Hebron, as the accords stipulate, until Palestinians cease all PLO political activity in East Jerusalem.

At the same time, Netanyahu's government has authorized the expansion of Jewish settlement in the West Bank even though such a move will almost certainly undermine the stature and authority of Arafat with his own people. But this does not matter to Netanyahu because he still sees Arafat as an enemy.

Netanyahu still thinks in terms of winners and losers, not partners

Netanyahu has made clear in his writings that he believes Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization are still committed to "the phased plan," under which the PLO would take whatever territory it could get from Israel in a peace accord with the idea that this is just a first step in the eventual destruction of the Zionist state. He also has argued that an independent Palestinian state, even if demilitarized, is an unacceptable risk to Israel. "A PLO state on the West Bank would be like a hand poised to strangle Israel's vital artery along the sea," Netanyahu wrote in A Place Among The Nations, published in 1993. "No wonder the overwhelming majority of Israelis reject it and see in it a mortal threat to their country."

Modern politician with one foot in the past . . . Netanyahu on the election trail that led to his victory in May PHOTOGRAPH: NATI HARNIK

As his books make clear, Netanyahu is a leader who has one foot in both the old and new Middle East. He is in many ways an old-fashioned Jewish nationalist who believes that Jews can only rely upon themselves for survival. His is a formula for permanent stalemate not much different from that of Shamir, under whom Netanyahu served as deputy foreign minister.

But while Shamir's world was defined by the values and fears of the pre-war Poland he grew up in and the subsequent Holocaust, Netanyahu is a modern politician, with a late 20th century sensibility and a respect for the power of words and images. He is a firm advocate of the joys and comforts of modern bourgeois society and a true believer in free market economics. As a result, there has always been a fundamental contradiction within Netanyahu between the past and future. You can't be both Sparta and Athens — operate a garrison-state under siege that spends anywhere from 15 to 25 percent of its gross national product on defense and still have enough discretionary income to pay for European luxury cars, Japanese electronics and home-delivered American pizzas. When he was in opposition, Netanyahu could have his ideological cake and eat it too. Now he must choose.

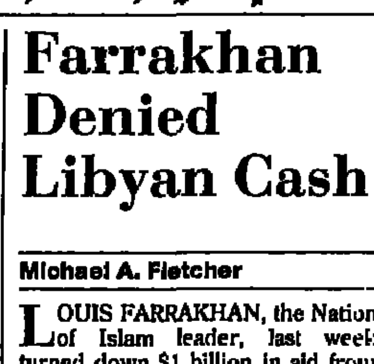
Even his enemies believe Netanyahu is flexible enough to learn from mistakes. In the first days of his new premiership he portrayed Syria as a terrorist state and suggested it should be added to Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea on the list of international pariahs. After holding talks with Mubarak and King Hussein, he quickly backed off those suggestions. He has also stopped preaching the virtues of democracy to an Arab world that doesn't want to be lectured to by any Israeli. "Not everyone understands Netanyahu, and no one knows what he is made of," wrote columnist Yoel Marcus in the Haaretz newspaper. "But one thing can be said for certain: He did not win his victory . . . to blow his career and lead the state to Hell."

Still, history in the Middle East is unforgiving. While I was in Jerusalem, Ehud Yatom, a retiring senior official of Israel's General Security Services, the security police known as the Shin Bet, revealed in a valedictory newspaper interview that he had personally crushed the skulls of two Palestinian prisoners captured after hijacking a passenger bus in 1981.

Yatom, whose brother Danny heads the Mossad intelligence service, said he was unrepentant, that other Arab terrorists had been similarly dispatched over the years and that this was nothing to be ashamed of. Official reaction to his interview was outrage at Yatom and calls for his prosecution — not for murder but for breaking silence and embarrassing the state.

The Yatom episode illustrates how people who believe their very national existence is at stake can justify committing brutal deeds. But it also reminded me of how remarkable were the actions of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres in refusing to follow the region's well-worn path of violence and enmity, putting aside 100 years of bloodshed and reaching out to an enemy they had defeated but not conquered. They took an extraordinary risk, defying not only history but to some extent their own instincts, and they paid a terrible price: Rabin with his life, Peres with his political career. Now the question is whether what they achieved was so singularly extraordinary that it will survive their demise. The answer lies with a young and untested prime minister who must decide whether to defy his own instincts as well.

Glenn Frankel, a Washington Post reporter, is author of Beyond The Promised Land: Jews and Arabs on the Hard Road to a New Israel (Simon & Schuster, 1995)



Farrakhan Denied Libyan Cash

Michael A. Fletcher

LOUIS FARRAKHAN, the Nation of Islam leader, last week turned down $1 billion in aid from Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi after the U.S. Treasury Department barred him from accepting the gift.

In a letter to Farrakhan's lawyers, the director of the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, R. Richard Newcomb, cited several reasons for the denial, including the belief that Libya is "a strong supporter of terrorist groups."

The denial also barred Farrakhan from receiving the $250,000 prize that came with a Libyan human rights award. Farrakhan, who flew to Libya for the award ceremony, called Gadhafi a "brother" as he turned down the money and vowed to protest the decision. Past winners of the award include Nelson Mandela.

Farrakhan's request became public last month, when he mentioned it during a speech before the National Association of Black Journalists. Farrakhan had argued the gift should be allowed because the money would be used to support joint ventures with businesses and financial institutions to help blacks and other minorities. He added that the Nation of Islam is a religious organization that obeys the law and is not "un-American."

However, a review of the Nation's business dealings offers another possible reason why a large infusion of money could be so important — the organization and various businesses and properties linked to it are beset by financial problems.

From the beginning, the Libyan offer faced obstacles. First, analysts doubted Libya could afford the $1 billion gift. Also, an anti-terrorism law that came into effect last week bars almost all transactions between U.S. citizens and so-called "terrorist" states, including Libya. Violations are punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a $250,000 fine.

Word of Farrakhan's request to receive the Libyan money prompted angry responses from members of Congress and from relatives of some of the 270 people killed in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Two Libyan intelligence agents have been accused in the downing of the airliner, and Gadhafi has refused to extradite them to the United States or Britain for trial.

Farrakhan has defended Gadhafi's stance, saying there is no firm evidence linking Libya to the bombing. He has pointed to a widely disputed book, Trail Of The Octopus, which accuses a former Drug Enforcement Administration agent for the bombing of Flight 103.

"[This money] is obviously a bribe, an attempt by Gadhafi to improve his image in the United States and the world," wrote Susan and Daniel Cohen in a letter to Newcomb urging the Treasury Department to reject the request. The Cohens' only child, Theodora, a university student, was killed in the bombing of Pan Am 103.

Speaking to reporters before leaving for Libya, Farrakhan promised to crisscross the U.S. "stirring up not only my people, but all those who would benefit from it" if he were turned down and that he would lead a march on Washington "like you have never seen."

Enter President Jack Ryan

Michael R. Beschloss

EXECUTIVE ORDERS
By Tom Clancy
Putnam. 874pp. $27.95

AS EXECUTIVE ORDERS opens, Tom Clancy's hero, Jack Ryan, has just been confirmed as vice president after his predecessor, Edward Kealty, is caught in a sex scandal. After an abortive war between the United States and Japan, terrorists fly a Japan Airlines 747 into the Capitol, killing the president, hundreds of representatives and senators, the joint chiefs of staff, most of the cabinet and all nine justices of the Supreme Court. Ryan cries, "You're telling me I'm the whole government right now?" He must not only recompose the government and fend off hostile foreign powers but resolve a domestic crisis touched off when the venomous Kealty insists that he never actually resigned.

Clancy's publisher has announced a first printing of 2 million copies for this latest gripping example of his highly popular thrillers. By the time the hardcover, paperback, film and other incarnations of Executive Orders are out, conceivably a fifth of all Americans could wind up absorbed in the story. For the historian, mass entertainment reveals much about the passions and curiosities of a people at a particular moment. What will the main narrative lines of Executive Orders tell scholars working in, say, 2096 about the Americans of our time?

Published in the wake of the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings and during the same summer as the White House is blown up in Independence Day, Clancy's new book shows that the current-day American is alert as never before to the possibility that no American landmark is safe from catastrophe. For most of our history, we have comforted ourselves with the exceptionalist notion that terrorism was a phenomenon generally practiced elsewhere.



ILLUSTRATION: ROMAN GENN

Especially considering that its author brandishes his 1980s-style sense of patriotism (the book is dedicated to the 40th president as "The Man Who Won the War"), Clancy's novel reflects surprising cynicism about our domestic political system. The author plays to Americans' current suspicions about their leaders' motives in his tale of the power grab by the elected vice president. Earlier in our history, a reader would have had a hard time accepting that, at a moment of unprecedented trauma, one of our leaders would shake the country further by selfishly challenging the presumed president's right to rule. In 1939, many Americans boycotted Frank Capra's Mr. Smith Goes To Washington to protest the portrayal of Jimmy Stewart's Senate colleagues as corrupt. Nowadays we do not blink at the notion that one of our leaders might turn a national tragedy into a great career move.

Executive Orders also opens a window on the American post-Cold War psyche. Dwight Eisenhower (another Clancy hero, who, as the author says in his narrative, "exercised power so skillfully that hardly anyone had noticed his doing anything at all") believed that when the confrontation with a Soviet empire ended, Americans would resume their essential benign composure. Unlike his old colleague Gen. George Patton, Ike scoffed at the idea that there was something in the American psychology that required an enemy.

CLANCY is of the Patton school. He has an old Russian friend tell Ryan, "What a superb enemy you were." Had this book been written during the Cold War, Clancy almost certainly would have used his Capitol bombing to usher in some kind of conflagration with Moscow. But like the screenwriters of this decade's James Bond films, Clancy has to find his foe somewhere else. Looking to the Middle East, he invents a war-making "United Islamic Republic" of Iran and Iraq.

Germ warfare fought by Ebola virus is another large element of Clancy's book that is very much of this place and time. For most of the Cold War, the weapon of mass destruction that most Americans thought about was nuclear. Now we live in an age of AIDS and flirtation by Iraqis and others with chemical and biological weapons, raising the specter of sudden new war-plagues of biblical proportions.

Perhaps the deepest wellspring of Clancy's appeal was his ability to expose the details of military and intelligence technology when the Cold War was threatening to grow dangerous. No issue was more timely. But although domestic political crisis and domestic terrorism loom large in Executive Orders, the author has wisely chosen not to abandon what he does so well.

The book derives much of its action and suspense from the author's talent in exposing the inner workings of endless unseen chambers of our own and other governments — for example, the presidential briefcase containing nuclear attack plans called "the football": "The first section, Jack saw, was labeled MAJOR ATTACK OPTION. It showed a map of Japan, many of whose cities were marked with multicolored dots meant in terms of delivered megatonnage; probably another page would quantify the predicted deaths. Ryan opened the binder rings and removed the whole section. 'I want these pages burned. I want this MAO eliminated immediately.' That merely meant that it would be filed away in some drawer in Pentagon War Plans, and also in Omaha. Things like this never died."

There is little evidence that Clancy has grown more interested in exploring the complexities of human personality. The thinking and motivations of his characters are not remotely as interesting as the situations in which he places them. The historian of 2096 would find little in this book to demonstrate the fascination that Americans of the 1990s have with deconstructing personal character and understanding the psycho-history of our leaders.

As compelling entertainment, Executive Orders shows that Clancy has lost none of his verve. As cultural artifact, the book suggests a domestic America that is perilous and grim.

Paperbacks

In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction, edited by Judith Kitchen and Mary Paumier Jones (Norton, $12)

"SOMETHING is going on out there," write Kitchen and Jones in their introduction. "Many fine contemporary writers are writing in a new form: a nonfiction form, literary rather than informational, and short — very short." Why? Writers and readers have been "schooled by the quick takes of television and movies" and have learned to do away with lengthy exposition. Contributors include Cynthia Ozick and Pico Iyer and Maxine Kumin on "Enough Jam for a Lifetime": "There is no quality control in my method. Every batch is a kind of revisionism. It makes its own laws. But the result is pure, deeply colored, uncomplicated, and unadulterated blackberry jam, veritably seedless, suitable for every occasion."

The Collected Stories of William Carlos Williams (New Directions, $14.95)

FOR OVER 40 years William Carlos Williams practiced medicine in a New Jersey town while writing the poems and short stories that made his literary name: "As a writer, I have never felt that medicine interfered with me, but rather that it was my very food and drink, the very thing which made it possible for me to write." This volume brings together 52 of his tales, including "The Use of Force," in which a doctor must match wits with an unwilling junior patient.

Vietnam: A Traveller's Literary Companion, edited by John Balaban and Nguyen Qui Duc (Whereabouts Press, $12.95)

"READING these stories will be like seeing Vietnam for the first time," promise the editors, "hearing Vietnamese speaking to themselves of their deepest concerns and pleasures, beyond the disfigurements of the last war, beyond its snapshots and captions and journalistic interpreters." Here can be found a sampling of Vietnamese fiction and, by extension, glimpses into the heart of the country itself. Other volumes in the series include travellers' companions to Costa Rica, Prague and Israel.

Portrait of a Young Man Drowning, by Charles Perry (Norton, $11); The Angry Ones, by John A. Williams (Norton, $11); Corner Boy, by Herbert Simmons (Norton, $11)

THESE three titles are the first entries in a new series called "Old School Books," which aims to reintroduce hard-edged fiction from African-American novelists of the 1950s, '60s and '70s. "This original 'pulp fiction' represents an edgy and extreme chapter of black literary history," write editors Marc Gerald and Samuel Blumenfeld. America wasn't ready for these hard-boiled dispatches when they first appeared . . . they join Stax Records, '70s gangsta chic, and the blaxploitation flick as cultural artifacts to be embraced by a new generation." Portrait Of A Young Man Drowning, set in Brooklyn, follows narrator Harold as he sinks into self-destruction. In The Angry Ones a successful publicity director struggles against racism. Corner Boy tells the violent story of Jake Adams, a world-weary dope pusher at 18.

Ruffles and Flourishes

Jonathan Yardley

BETWEEN HOPE AND HISTORY:
Meeting America's Challenges for the 21st Century
By Bill Clinton
Times Books. 178pp. $16.95

IF YOUR idea of perfect heaven is to bliss out on a State of the Union speech; if you think acceptance addresses at national political conventions are the ultimate in rhetorical eloquence; if you end every day snuggled between the sheets, just you and the Congressional Record . . . if that's you, baby, then have I got a book for you.

Between Hope And History, which was rushed into print in time to paper the Democratic National Convention, is the wonk book to end all wonk books, though there's little reason to believe that it will accomplish this eminently desirable purpose. It is a statement, according to its author, of "my philosophy," but we aren't exactly talking William Jefferson Socrates. We are talking what passes in *fin de siècle* Washington for "philosophy," which is a mixture of blue-sky self-congratulation and partisan nit-picking.

A publicist for Times Books confided to a breathless press that "the president didn't want us to announce the book until he was happy with every word." Happy? Ecstatic is more like it. Real effort of the imagination is demanded in order to heap upon the innocent reader a mountain of banalities such as is contained herein. A "new covenant" for the environment! A call to "come together . . . to smother the flames of hatred and kindle the flames of faith and hope"!

Is that writing, or is that writing? And if that doesn't satisfy you, there's enough "vision" and "future" here to reduce Newt Gingrich to howls of envy. Bill Clinton has a "vision for America," and his eyes are on the future, which "lies ahead." Bill Clinton means to "embrace the future." Then he is going to "blaze a path into the future." A path is for "equipping people to walk into the future." When they get there, "their futures will be ours." Like Clinton himself, they will understand that "it is not a future we should flee from, but one we must embrace together wholeheartedly." Why? Because "mine is a truly progressive vision of the future."

"Vision" and "future," together in a single sentence. Yet another accomplishment of the Clinton administration, to be added to a list, longer than Martin Luther's, that includes grabbing full credit for an economy that is "the healthiest it has been in thirty years" as well as for "progress" in reducing "the rate of serious crimes." If you thought alphabet soup died with the rise of Ronald Reagan, think again; Clinton drops the names of government programs he has established or wants to establish with the practiced facility of a born New Dealer, or New Covenantor, or whatever it is he's offering himself as this week.

But just because Clinton wants the government to fix this and fix that doesn't mean he wants "big" government. No, no, no. He and his fellow Democrats "say the era of big government is over," though you can't really see it shrinking as he qualifies that bold declaration: "We need government to do those things which are essential to giving us the tools we need to make the most of our own lives, to honoring our obligations to one another, to building a strong economy, to protecting the public health and our environment." In fact, it's getting bigger right before our eyes: "Of the more than 10 million new jobs created since I became president, 93 percent of them have been in the private sector," which my calculator tells me means 700,000 new government jobs in less than four years.

The word for about 99 percent of what's to be found herein is "bomfoggery," a coinage invented by the press some years ago as notebook shorthand to be used whenever Nelson Rockefeller started babbling about "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God." Sloppy rhetorical excess was a Rockefeller trademark, and it's one of Clinton's as well. He absolutely adores the tired phrase and the overblown sentiment, and he gravitates toward both with unerring accuracy. Reading his prose is like mainlining a dictionary of clichés. Inasmuch as he is constitutionally incapable of closing the spigot, the law of averages tells us that every once in a while he will make sense, as he does here when talking about individual responsibility and about those who forget "that the heart of the word 'conservative' is 'conserve'."

Don't think for a moment, though, that any real or self-styled "conservative" will be on the mailing list for Between Hope And History. As they might say in Arkansas: There goes that Clinton boy, preachin' to the choir again.

IMF backs debt relief plan

Alex Brummer

THE International Monetary Fund has indicated that it is willing to provide grants to reduce the debts of the world's poorest countries, as part of the plan approved by G7 leaders at the Lyon summit in June.

Until now the IMF has been unwilling to concede the principle of debt reduction.

The offer by the IMF to make grants available to qualifying countries is contained in a series of confidential papers prepared for a discussion by executive directors of the World Bank and IMF later this month. However, the documents suggest that the IMF is no closer to reaching agreement with dissident shareholders over the sale of IMF gold to support the joint Bank/Fund initiative. Opposition to gold sales is led by Germany, with some support from Switzerland and Italy.

The papers make it clear that the IMF will reduce the burdens of its claims on a country by means of a grant or loan which would be used to cover outstanding debt service obligations. They show that the World Bank has committed some $500 million from its own resources to the process.

There is increasing concern, however, that the debt relief plan will not be ready for final approval by finance ministers meeting in Washington later this month. Aside from the dispute over gold sales, there have been delays in winning the approval of the Paris Club of official creditors for parallel reduction of up to 90 per cent of bilateral debt. The Paris Club is not due to discuss the issue until September 26.

But the papers do spell out in detail how the debt initiative will work, how the World Bank Trust Fund will operate, as well as specifying financial contributions. Following strong representations from non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam, the Bank and Fund have shortened the proposed six-year qualification period for debt relief.

The new approach would allow a country such as Uganda, which has begun implementing economic reforms, to cross the first hurdle for debt relief as early as next spring. If it continues to implement the reforms required by multilateral lenders, Uganda could be free of the larger part of its debt service payments by 2000.

Under the debt relief plan for Uganda, the IMF would be required to reduce its debt claims on that country by $27 million by the end of 1999; the World Bank by $155 million and other multilateral agencies, including the European Investment Bank, by $18 million.

The Paris Club arrangements could relieve Uganda of a further $150 million of its burden. The relief from the existing debt burden would mean that Uganda could use the funds to invest in health, education and development rather than repaying loans and interest to international creditors.

Winchester Commodities, under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office, has scaled down its operations

Metal firm closes its brokerage

Patrick Donovan and Paul Murphy

WINCHESTER Commodities — the metals company which has been investigated by the Serious Fraud Office in connection with a multi-billion pound Japanese copper scandal — is closing its brokerage business.

The company, headed by $22.5 million-a-year traders Charles Vincent and Ashley Levett, has told City regulators that trading stopped last week. The news comes weeks after the Hampshire country homes of Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, both aged 35, were searched by the SFO and City of London police.

Raids followed the announcement that police are investigating possible British links with a huge trading fraud uncovered by the Japanese trading giant Sumitomo. Winchester, which has denied improper dealings and offered full co-operation with the authorities, is known to have had links with Sumitomo's Yasuo Hamanaka, the rogue dealer sacked after the fraud was discovered.

Winchester was founded six years ago and reached the peak of its success in 1993 with a series of spectacular deals involving 30 per cent of the world's copper supply. A spokesman for the Securities and Futures Authority said: "I can confirm that Winchester Brokerage — the SFA-regulated company — has notified us that it will cease business from the close of business today [August 30]."

The authority said it believed Winchester had taken the decision to shut its regulated operations "because of a downturn in the copper market and negative publicity".

Charles Vincent, the Winchester Commodities chief whose house was searched by fraud officers

The group's managing director, Stephen Heath, said: "Post the Sumitomo affair, the level of overall business in the metals market has been very low, and I believe that a number of other players in the market are also looking at a retrenchment.

"Specifically, as regards Winchester, the continued adverse publicity that the company has had . . . has damaged severely customer-client relationships and staff morale."

Leading traders appeared to have been expecting the Winchester closure. Gary West, a trader at Woralco Ltd, said: "We knew they'd been scaling down, and there had been plenty of rumours that certain people had been leaving, so it's not that unexpected. I think this is less down to the Sumitomo débâcle than to the fact that Vincent and Levett no longer have anything to do with Winchester on a day-to-day basis."

The outlook for the metal price has been made more uncertain because of a strike in Chile, the world's largest copper producer. Industrial action last month drove copper futures in New York to their highest price in more than two months.

City firm freezes three unit trusts

Richard Miles

TENS of thousands of investors were left in limbo on Monday after one of the City's most prestigious money management companies, Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, suspended dealings in three of its most successful investment funds and announced it was investigating "possible irregularities".

Dealings in three unit trusts — the MG European Growth Trust, the MG European Capital Growth Fund and the MG Europa Fund, which have attracted more than $2.1 billion of investors' money — were stopped indefinitely after the institution suspended one of its top fund managers, Peter Young.

Mr Young has received widespread praise for the success of investments under his control since he joined Morgan Grenfell four years ago. Colleagues said he cleared his desk on Friday last week.

Morgan Grenfell, which is owned by Germany's Deutsche Bank and manages investments worth $105 billion worldwide, is carrying out an internal investigation and has contacted Imro, the City watchdog which monitors the fund management industry.

The three funds are all unit trusts specialising in European stocks. Many private investors have pensions or savings invested in the biggest, the $1.1 billion European Growth Trust, which trades on the Irish Stock Exchange.

Imro confirmed on Monday that it has also launched an investigation into the irregularities at the institution. Disclosure of the investigations, believed to be in their early stages, comes days after blue-chip investment house Jardine Flemings was fined $600,000 by Imro and forced to pay $18 million compensation to investors. Jardine found a former fund manager had cheated clients by pocketing profits.

Mr Young, who has worked for City institutions Mercury Asset Management and Equity & Law, was well-known as an investment "risk-taker", with a penchant for shares in high technology companies.

The suspended funds were heavy investors in Britain's leading biotechnology drug company, British Biotechnology, and the Scandinavian telephones group, Nokia. However, the possible irregularities are said to involve investments in private companies, unquoted on any leading stock market.

Morgan Grenfell Asset Management said the investigation will focus on unquoted stocks held by the portfolios of all three funds. It is understood no more than 10 per cent of the total value of the funds is at risk, and the company has pledged to compensate investors for any losses.

A spokesman said it was not possible to say how long the investigation would take or when dealings in the three unit trusts might be resumed. In the meantime, investors will be unable to liquidate their investments. However, "any liabilities will be met by the group".

In Brief

LLOYD'S of London has declared its $4.8 billion rescue package unconditional and disclosed that 91 per cent of its 34,000 investors had accepted the deal. The settlement is the key plank of the plan designed to prevent the collapse of the 308-year-old insurance market.

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Portillo has declared that Britain is ready to commit itself to the production of the $60 billion Eurofighter aircraft, giving a boost to industry and jobs and a firm nudge to Germany, which is dragging its feet.

SURGING UK exports to Europe have fuelled a pick-up in trade performance, dispelling City fears that domestic demand would send Britain spiralling into the red. The shortfall with European Union partners fell to $42 million in June, against $471 million in May.

LORD WEINSTOCK ended his 33-year stint at the head of GEC by announcing that the Anglo-French joint venture GEC-Alsthom is studying a $13 billion merger with French nuclear reactor builder, Framatome.

BOEING is to hire 5,000 more extra staff this year than expected to boost monthly production of its 777 jet by 40 per cent. Nearly 10,000 new employees will work at the company's Washington state facilities. A further 3,300 will be taken on at Wichita, Kansas.

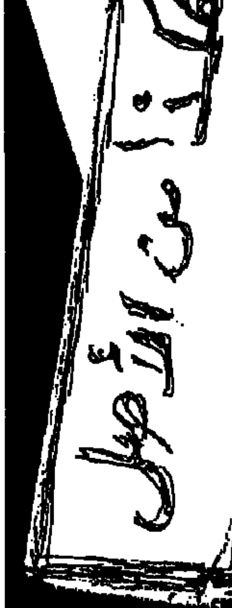
BRITISH AIRWAYS' proposed alliance with American Airlines will suffer a further setback if the UK Office of Fair Trading rules that the deal is anti-competitive, following Washington's decision to cancel talks aimed at opening the transatlantic market to free competition.

PRUDENTIAL, the UK's largest life insurer, unveiled the £1.75 billion sale of its Mercantile and General reinsurance arm to Swiss Re, reigniting speculation that it is poised to make a bid for the Woolwich building society.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates September 2	Sterling rates August 12
Australia	1.9732-1.9757	1.9954-1.9979
Austria	16.30-16.32	16.10-16.11
Belgium	47.67-47.76	47.16-47.26
Canada	2.1343-2.1364	2.1270-2.1291
Denmark	8.95-8.96	8.85-8.86
France	7.92-7.93	7.83-7.83
Germany	2.3175-2.3200	2.2883-2.2907
Hong Kong	12.08-12.09	12.00-12.01
Ireland	0.9638-0.9653	0.9614-0.9627
Italy	2,361-2,363	2,350-2,353
Japan	170.15-170.34	166.84-167.05
Netherlands	2.5967-2.5993	2.5680-2.5706
New Zealand	2.2591-2.2622	2.2589-2.2626
Norway	10.03-10.05	9.91-9.93
Portugal	237.23-237.64	235.38-235.70
Spain	195.56-195.76	194.95-195.25
Sweden	10.36-10.39	10.31-10.33
Switzerland	1.8856-1.8079	1.8606-1.8633
USA	1.5590-1.5600	1.5514-1.5524
ECU	1.2293-1.2306	1.2201-1.2214

FTSE100 Share Index up 51.1 at 3864.4. FTSE 250 Index up 58.1 at 4414.0. Gold down $0.75 at $386.75.





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For further information, please contact James Davidson, Personnel Manager, Children's Aid Direct, 82 Caversham Road, Reading RG1 8AE, Telephone 01734 584 000, Fax 01745 581 230, email 100523.3025@compuserve.com. The closing date for completed applications is September 27th, 1996.

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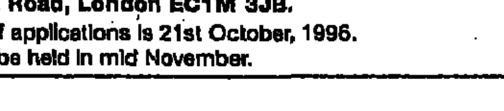
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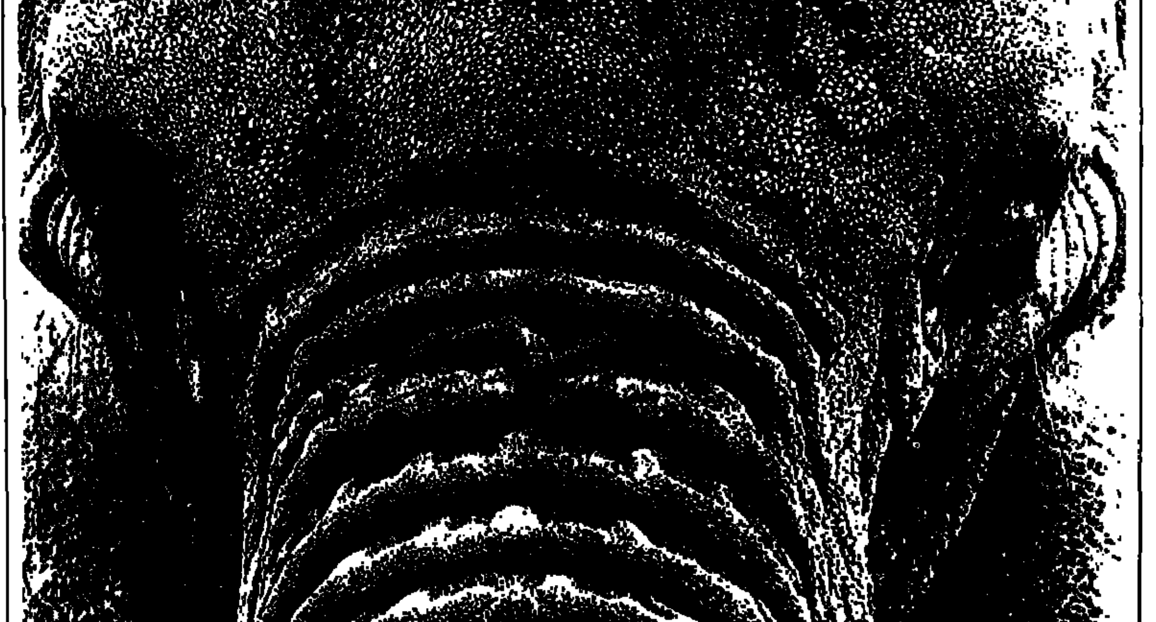
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Herd that fought for its kingdom

A decade of civil war in Sri Lanka has ended with the losers being led away to enforced exile, reports **Suzanne Goldenberg**

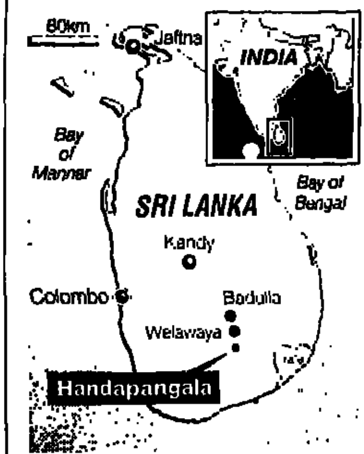

Dispossessed . . . Sri Lankan authorities have driven the elephants off their land and into a nature reserve after failing to find a way for man and beast to co-exist PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GUCWA

IN THE villages that ring this glassy man-made lake everyone has an elephant story to tell, and Tissakutti Premadasa's is as remarkable as any other. The evening sun on his back was driving him towards home when something swatted at his cap. Before the startled farmer could look back, a belt of grey had clasped his waist like steel, and he was hoisted into the air.

He dangled there for a terrifying instant, before the trunk uncurled and dropped him on the ground. Then its owner trod over him, resuming its stately course through the jungle. Premadasa broke his collar bone and leg, but he was luckier than most — he survived.

In his village of Pubuduwewagama, the attack transformed this farmer with a herd of 50 fat buffalo from a man of substance into a living myth. All but one other such encounters with elephants have ended in death. And to Premadasa's evident satisfaction, the elephant came to learn the error of its ways. A few months after their meeting, the beast fell into a pit and died. All 200 families in the village have elephant stories to tell.

Four years ago, there was a scraping sound outside Premadasa's home in the middle of the night. There came a thunderous knock and six elephants walked through the mud walls into the front room. The family fled out the back.



Now the Sri Lankan authorities believe they have found a way out of the elephant wars. Last month, wildlife officials drove the herd that lived around Handapangala out of the jungle and along a path formed by electrified fences to the Yalle nature reserve, 24km away.

By luring the elephants from their ancient domain the government had hoped to end what had become a lumbering dance of death — deadly for both species. Last year alone the toll was elephants 21, humans 53, according to the plantation and wildlife minister, Ratnasiri Wickramanayake. He estimates more than 140 houses were destroyed by rampaging beasts, and countless fields of crops.

For while the herd wreaked havoc, the villagers fought back, uninhibited by Buddhist tradition which holds the elephant to be sacred. Over the years, dozens of elephants have fallen to vengeful villagers. Some of the beasts were shot, others crippled by treading on logs studded with nails that were deliberately put in their paths.

More died for the pursuit of profit. Despite an international ban on the traffic in ivory, the going rate for tusks is easily $1,000 a kilogram. It wasn't always thus. Fifteen years ago, the lands around Handapangala were untamed jungle, a haven of palms and foliage for a herd reckoned to number between 160 and 190 elephants. There were only a few human inhabitants: small scale cultivators who lived in tree houses, and moved along with the seasons.

"This was their kingdom," Premadasa says. "We people didn't belong here." Then the government began clearing the land for the island's most ambitious agro-industry project, the Pelwatte Sugar Industries plantation, and the invasion began. The elephant kingdom was reduced to less than 400 hectares of forest and pasture land. With the 60,000 arriving humans came buffalo and other farm animals. All fed off the same pastures that had once belonged to the elephants alone, and drank from the reservoirs that were intended to nourish the new cash crops. In the parched summer months, the competition grew fierce.

Local government officials say it's impossible to tot up the entire ruin of the last decade, caused by desperate elephants searching for food. "House damage and property damage is happening every day but normally we don't record these things because it is useless," says H P Jayananda at the administrative headquarters of Welawaya. "We aren't giving compensation so people normally don't complain to us." Even so, a few villagers, dressed in starched white sarongs, wait timidly in his airless cabin with the latest tale of woe.

"You never knew what they would do. Sometimes they just came to have their dinner in the village and then they would walk along the road peacefully. But in the evening when people would go out to the local shops, the elephants would come and kill them," says D M Podeappuhamy, who grows rice, coconut, jackfruit and mango on a sizeable plot of land. "We started to go out with firecrackers and torches, but the elephants just got used to them."

And yet the villagers managed to find some harmony with the herd. As Handapangala's fame grew as a spot for watching wildlife, the locals set up tea shops for tourists and prospered. Many believe the elephants only attack those who have wronged them.

Meanwhile, at Pelwatte, the sugar cane stretches as far as the eye can see: an 8,000-hectare expanse of gold and green that translates into hundreds of tons of sugar a day. FYI, the Commonwealth Development Corporation, which is a UK government body, is the largest single foreign investor with a 16 per cent shareholding. It has every luxury a plantation could want — neat bungalows for the managers, swimming pool, tennis courts, golf course — all contained within an electrified fence and patrolled by 800 armed night watchmen on foot and in tractors.

But even they cannot keep the elephants out. They charge at the fence with logs curled up in their trunks, neutralise it, and have their dinner. "At certain times they came to have a taste of the sweet cane," says project co-ordinator P Ganegama. "Sometimes it happened regularly — once a week."

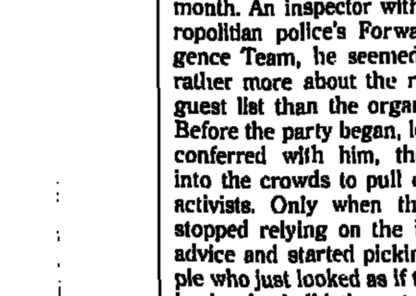
Earlier attempts to get man and elephant to co-exist foundered. And so last month the elephants were forced to move on. More than 100 forest rangers, armed with firecrackers, drove the elephants through the electrified passage to their new home. Environmentalists have criticised the drive, arguing that Yalle, which this summer has baked in an island-wide drought, cannot produce enough water or fodder for the herd. Wildlife officials agree, but say the elephants will be all right after the rains.

The wildlife department is plainly thrilled about the clear-out, claiming it was more like a majestic walk through the jungle than an expulsion. Reportedly, the herd was moved without a single shot being fired. And, despite everything, the villagers were sad to see the last of them go. "Although there has been a conflict with the animals, now we feel lonely," said one.

But in Pubuduwewagama, people say the war with nature is not yet won. Days after the round-up, wildlife department officials were searching for four stray bull elephants. One lost baby had already wandered back home. "They will be back, they are not used to that place. This is their kingdom," Premadasa says.

Heavy hand of the law keeps tabs on the 'enemy within'

Britain's greens are being treated like terrorists, writes **George Monbiot**



THERE was an uninvited guest at the street party organised by traffic protesters in Brighton last month. An inspector with the Metropolitan police's Forward Intelligence Team, he seemed to know rather more about the rest of the guest list than the organisers did. Before the party began, local police conferred with him, then darted into the crowds to pull out known activists. Only when the officers stopped relying on the inspector's advice and started picking up people who just looked as if they might be involved did they start making mistakes — one of the 80 people arrested was a man handing out leaflets about Dianetics.

The inspector was well-placed to know whom to grab. His unit has been monitoring environmental protesters all over the country. In June and July it used a house opposite the London offices of the pressure group Reclaim the Streets to watch activists' movements. Whenever anyone left on a bicycle, a car and a mountain bike would follow. When the campaign's minibus pulled out, four cars took off behind it. In July, the Forward Intelligence Team raided the office and removed its computers.

Environmentalists subjected to crude observation of this kind say they find it taxing but not particularly alarming. They are far more concerned about the sort of surveillance that is often suspected but seldom proved. As the action campaigns develop, they are accumulating more and more evidence to suggest that environmental protest is becoming the state's "necessary enemy", replacing miners, communists and terrorists as a justification for lavish spending on domestic intelligence.

In March, the Association of Chief Police Officers, while admitting that no terrorist offences by greens have taken place, and failing to furnish any evidence to suggest that they were likely to occur, decided to start using the Anti-Terrorist Squad to gather intelligence on environmental activists. Already, even the most law-abiding greens complain they are being made to feel like potential bombers.

At the end of 1994, Special Branch announced it was changing its priorities to concentrate on environmental activism. Then, earlier this year, Contract Journal carried extracts from a Special Branch report, suggesting, again without accompanying evidence, that environmental activists might be preparing for "suicide attacks" on road builders.

To avert this and other peculiar possibilities, the report had identified 1,700 campaigners. During the McDonald's libel trial, one of the company's vice-presidents testified that Special Branch had been passing him information about potential protesters.

In court last year, activists who had planned a demonstration against an opencast mine near Leeds asked a police officer how his force had managed to arrive at the protest site before the protesters. He replied that the police had found the details on the Internet. But neither the date nor the location had been posted on the Net — these details, the activists believe, could only have been obtained by bugging or infiltration. Several campaigners complain of hearing previous conversations played back to them when they pick up the telephone, or getting through to Group 4 security while trying to phone a friend.

Were there evidence that green campaigners had become a genuine terrorist threat, all this attention would be justifiable. But environmental protest in Britain is avowedly non-violent. Campaigners routinely break the laws designed to contain them, such as the aggravated trespass and trespassory assembly provisions of the last Criminal Justice Act, and sometimes commit obstruction, a breach of the peace or even criminal damage. But that's about as far as it goes.

To apply the tactics of counter-terrorism to people organising openly on behalf of popular causes is about as measured a response as using 50 horses and 30 hounds to kill a fox. But, as well as providing work for unemployed spies, this surveillance is also a deeply worrying indication that the state is so ill at ease with itself than it can brook no questioning of its wisdom.

But the ability to challenge the state's authority, reclaiming politics from the politicians, is good for the state, as well as society. Society is like an amoeba: it moves from the margins, not from the centre. Cut off from its margins, the state can only sclerotise and shrivel, becoming ever less responsive to change.

Heterodoxy and subversion are the ushers of progress.

Dangerous, sinister cult or a family-minded movement devoted to human spiritual welfare? No other religious group provokes as much suspicion and hostility as the Church of Scientology — and no other religious group is so desperate for respectability. **Madeleine Bunting** visits Scientology's British headquarters

The church that Ron built

A *SERIES* of people in different national costumes but identical toothpaste smiles pop up on the screen to utter in their language one word, "Trust". Triumphant music rises as the voice-over starts: "On the day we can fully trust each other there will be peace on earth. The Church of Scientology provides practical wisdom which it believes can help you to lead a happier and more fulfilling life."

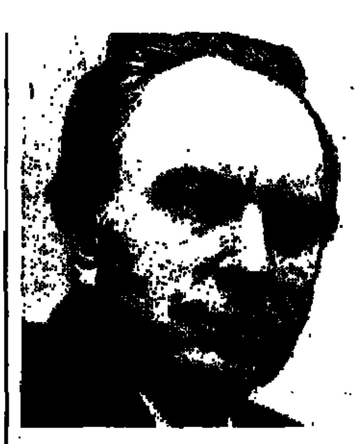
This is the advert expected to reach thousands of homes in Britain this autumn when the Church of Scientology launches its first major television advertising campaign. It is guaranteed to provoke outrage from anti-cult monitoring groups for whom Scientologists are one of the most dangerous and sinister movements. But the Scientologists, banned from the airwaves since 1993 — after "Trust" on satellite prompted one complaint — are celebrating their reprieve by the Independent Television Commission as one more sign of their acceptance into the mainstream.

More adverts are planned to follow "Trust". They have the same mawkish, platitudinous quality to them. A small boy sits disconsolate as one hat after another is crammed on to his head over a voice-track of, "Why don't you be a doctor, a teacher, do what your mother says . . ." Eventually he himself chooses the hat he had been wearing in the first place — that of a fireman. "Be true to your own goals," growls the voice-over. Another advert features a girl sitting on a man's knee, manipulating his dour face: "Force yourself to smile and you'll stop frowning. Force yourself to laugh and you'll find something to laugh at . . . A Being causes his own feelings. The greatest joy in life is creating. Splurge on it." Both adverts end with that perennial stock image of anything spiritual — a sunrise over a mountain.

The Scientologists are trying a new tack. After decades of an almost exclusively hostile press in Britain and an increasingly aggressive campaign against them in Germany, they're trying a soft cuddly image of cute little children with a message of peace and love. Since their advert is barely distinguishable from commercials for soft lavatory paper, it's hard to imagine it attracting new followers into this bizarre belief system.

Scientology either provokes incredulous derision, or sinister allegations. This hostility appears to be affecting recruitment. According to Scientologist figures, 3,947 people "participated in services for the first time" in 1994 in the UK. That figure dropped to 3,066 in 1995, and so far this year it is only 1,991.

What Scientologists take comfort from is that for all the criticism in Europe, Scientology has become hip in the United States. John Travolta pronounces in their introductory video for interested newcomers, "There's no part of my life which it hasn't helped." Tom Cruise readily admits to being a member. In Germany, Cruise's beliefs prompted an attempt at a mass boycott of his new film, Mission: Impossible. But in the US, the celebrities are finally managing to confer on Scientology a respectability which has so far eluded it.



Founding spirit

The inspiration behind the Church of Scientology is American science fiction writer, L Ron Hubbard (1911-86) who developed a set of beliefs about the working of the human mind and spirit in Dianetics, published in 1950. He then developed Scientology, a practical philosophy to help people to "clear" their spirit in a series of books published in the early fifties. The first Church of Scientology was set up in Los Angeles in 1954. It now claims 8 million members worldwide, including 100,000 in the UK

It is respectability that the Church of Scientology most wants. In their video, they make great play of the fact that 65 courts around the world have ruled that they are a religion, and most important of all, that the American tax authorities have given them tax-exempt status as a bona fide religion. Not in Britain. They have been rebuffed repeatedly by the Charity Commission which insisted as recently as last year that they could not be considered a religion under British law. But they are nothing if not persistent. Last month, three senior Scientologists set up a new company which has undertaken to comply with the terms of the 1993 Charities Act as part of a long-term strategy to win acceptance.

There are two obvious reasons why the Scientologists scare everybody: they are rich and they attract a sizeable number of recruits. Most new religious movements struggle chaotically with a few donations and a tiny membership. For example, there are only 600 Moonies in the UK, and the vast majority of recruits leave within the first year. But the Scientologists are altogether different; they claim to have around 100,000 members in the UK and to attract several thousand every year, and they clearly have plenty of money. A clue to one lucrative source of income is that their video for newcomers is primarily a sales pitch to buy the vast tomes of Scientology scriptures with their message of eternal truth (copyright: Church of Scientology).

But what religion doesn't want to recruit new members? Nor can the wilder allegations of breaking up families or brainwashing be upheld: sober academic analysis has failed to establish either charge. It has proved hard to blame the breakdown of a family relationship solely on Scientology; often the relationship was problematic or the family cannot accept this new preoccupation. Scientologists point to their code of ethics, of which number five is, "Honour and Help your parents." As for brainwashing, there is no evidence that it is possible to force a set of beliefs on someone who is unwilling to accept them. It is a convenient but baseless way of explaining why anyone would become a Scientologist.

Because, whichever way you look at it, Scientology to the outsider appears completely loopy. The 300-odd staff at the Saint Hill Manor headquarters in Sussex wear dark blue naval uniform, complete with chains and epaulettes; they have committed themselves to the Sea Organisation — or the Org, as it is affectionately known — for a billion years. This originates in the passion for sailing of Scientology's founder, Lafayette Ron Hubbard — known as LRH.

Equally loopy is the Scientologists' habit of setting aside an office for LRH in each of their churches. The corporate-style nameplate sits on the unused desk beside the unused blotter and unused pens. The door is open, the lights are on, but no one goes beyond the red rope across the threshold. A brand new naval peaked cap — white, gold braid — sits on the desk commensurate with LRH's rank of commodore.

LRH is lavishly praised as a Renaissance Man; all his achievements are endlessly detailed. Novelist, film-maker, photographer, musician, artist, educational theorist, management theorist as well as inventor, mariner and criminal reformer. On top of that, he devised a drug rehabilitation programme, and of course, Scientology, a system of "applied religious philosophy" which he develops in the 40 or more books that make up the "scriptures" of Scientology. These are the books which, according to Scientologists, "contain the answers that human beings have been looking for for eternity".

S*CIENTOLOGY* is believed to be the summation of all previous religious insight, but it makes great play of being a belief system for the 20th century, and has the apparatus and language which reflects a technological age.

This explains the absurd dependence on a machine called the electropsychometer (E-meter) which Hubbard claimed could scientifically locate and measure pain. Holding two tin cans connected to the meter in your hands, memories of pain translate into electrical currents which allegedly register on a dial. When I held the cans, the needle lurched erratically with no pattern — there were good reasons for that, they told me ominously.

The E-meter is used during "auditing", which is a central part of the Scientologists' spiritual path. They believe that our behaviour is determined by our individual history of pain, which causes us to react in a particular way and is the source of all human failings. If this pain can be dismantled, the spirit will be "cleared" to achieve its full potential. In individual sessions a Scientologist talks out his or her problems to a fellow Scientologist whose job is to prompt the talker, and listen without judgment.

It sounds much like counselling or psychotherapy, but to a Scientologist such a comparison is heresy. The great fraud of the 20th century has been the psychotherapeutic and psychiatric professions, according to LRH. Where many conspiracy theories revolve around the military-industrial complex, Scientologists see the "psychiatric-industrial complex" as their enemy: psychiatrists in league with government are inhibiting human spiritual development and infiltrating society with their poisonous drugs.

Apart from auditing, devout Scientologists must study Hubbard's works. In the oak-panelled study rooms of the castle at Saint Hill, heads are bent over the tomes, or are listening through headsets to some of the 2,500 tapes. Scientology claims to make you happier, think more clearly, to unleash your full creative potential and to help you achieve more in your career.

S*AINT HILL* recently hosted a European arts festival, and the place was teeming with families in painting, drama and music classes. There were Scientologists engrossed in offering counselling on careers or on artistic achievements. It was just the image the Scientologists want to project: harmless, devoted to the well-being of all humanity and family-minded.

So are Scientologists dangerous? The self-reflection involved in auditing probably may do some good — it is possible to discern some Buddhist principles about the programmed nature of the mind buried in Scientology — and while the studying may seem a waste of time, it's difficult to see it actually harming people. The concern is that people find themselves caught up in a spiral of expensive courses and auditing sessions.

But perhaps the greatest concern is the nature of Scientologists themselves. After a visit, it is hard not to come away disturbed by their behaviour. The staff in the Org at Saint Hill manor all live on a big estate in Crowborough 20km away where their children attend a Scientology school. This is a deeply insular, introverted community which appears to have few normal contacts with the outside world. They are a wary group. Perhaps that is not surprising after all the adverse publicity they have received. But they give a very good impression of people with something to hide.

The public relations team talk quite happily about LRH or auditing, but their answers have a bland, slippery quality — making extravagant claims, and quoting unheard-of "experts" and inaccessible research to support the point — which doesn't add to their credibility. Questions about their plans to expand or why they get such critical media coverage prompt vague responses. Even quite simple queries cannot be answered on the spot but are referred to nameless higher authorities. They appear to have no sense of humour or any hint of self-deprecation. They take themselves very, very seriously. Wrapped up in their world of Scientology, they seem to have forgotten how mighty strange they appear to us landlubbers.

Having your fat and not eating it

David Bradley

N*OW* you can have your cake, chips and anything else you fancy and eat it, without consuming an ounce of fat, according to scientists at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society in Orlando, Florida, last week.

Chemist George Inglett of the US Department of Agriculture's Biopolymer Research Unit in Illinois has invented a material made from ground seed hulls that can be used instead of fat in cooking.

"Most fat substitutes replace fat with carbohydrates, which sometimes add back as many calories as they replace," he told the meeting. Called Z-Trim, the new fat substitute could cut as many as 700 calories from an average daily diet of 3,500 and can be used to make everything from cheese and hamburgers to chocolate without adding a single calorie to the meal.

Z-Trim is good news for anyone who can't help indulging in fatty foods and, according to expert taste tests, chocolate is just as tasty, and burgers are even more tender than normal.

Z-Trim is made from a rather unwholesome sounding mixture of ground agricultural products, including oats, soya beans, peas and rice hulls. Plant pigments and other natural impurities are removed and then the mixture is treated with an alkaline solution to produce a gel-like substance, which swells to give a fatty texture.

The result is a material that can be used instead of fat in all sorts of cooking. Inglett claims that because Z-Trim is composed only of insoluble fibre it also has the advantage of adding useful roughage to food.

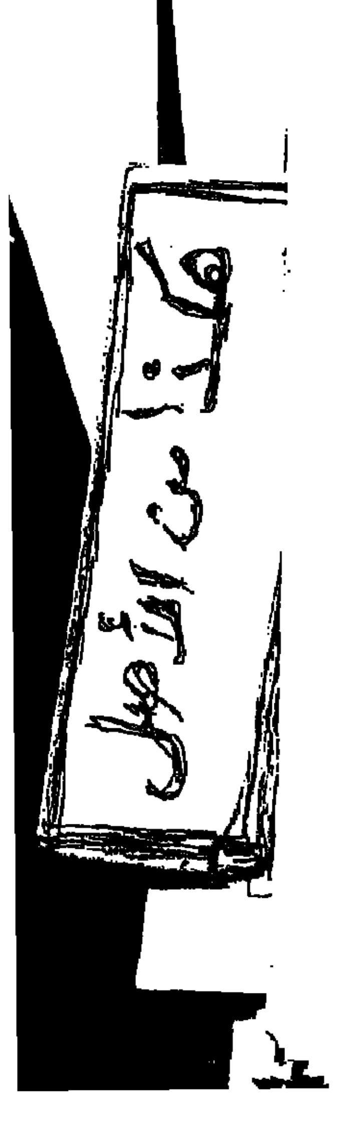
According to Inglett, Z-Trim works differently from other fat substitutes, such as the recently launched Olestra, and so should not cause embarrassing problems, such as anal leakage, suffered by a few consumers.

He added that Z-Trim could be used to produce everything from low-calorie chocolate bars to fat-free cheesy snacks. He even delivered samples.

The idea of food that doesn't make you fat has been exciting US scientists for years. Olestra — launched with a fanfare last year — attracted swift criticism. It was accused by some of not only not providing calories, but also of actually preventing the uptake of vital nutrients.

But for a nation in which obesity has reached epidemic proportions, there is a golden prize at stake. Geneticists are on the hunt for an obesity gene, pharmacologists dream of a slimming pill, while nutrition scientists are not sure there is a real substitute for dietary moderation and vigorous exercise.

The jury is likely to be out on Z-Trim for a while, too. "The key is, how is it going to affect food choices," said Barbara Rolls, of Pennsylvania State university. "Are they going to reduce their calorie intake, or will they later compensate?"



Hawaii's warm welcome has turned cold for sovereignty advocate Haunani-Kay Trask, below

Aloha smiles disappear in fight for rights

Mark Tran in Honolulu

H*AUNANI-KAY TRASK* wouldn't care if she never saw another *haole*, the Hawaiian term for whites, ever again, and she has this message for tourists: "If you are thinking of visiting my homeland, please don't. We don't want or need any more tourists, and we certainly don't like them."

Such fierce opinions jangle against the Aloha, or welcoming, spirit so avidly cultivated by Hawaii for the benefit of visitors. Yet Trask has emerged as one of the most forceful advocates of sovereignty for the state's 200,000 Native Hawaiians who trace their ancestry to the original inhabitants of the islands before the arrival of Captain Cook in 1778.

She gained notoriety in 1991 when a white male student at the University of Hawaii, Joey Carter, complained that *haole* was a racist term, not unlike "nigger". Trask, who teaches at the university, wrote her own letter about the American conquest of Hawaii and white racism. She concluded by suggesting that if Carter did not like Hawaii, its language or customs, he could leave since Hawaiians would certainly benefit from one less *haole*.

The ensuing furore nearly cost Trask her job. But she survived and is now director of the university's centre for Hawaiian studies.

Together with her sister, she now leads Hawaii's largest and best organised Native Hawaiian group, Ka Lahui. The group has 21,000 registered citizens, an elected legislature, a constitution and a master plan for sovereignty. The sovereignty issue has been gathering momentum over the past 20 years, the political manifestation of a renaissance in Hawaiian culture.

Most haoles — a term also used by whites — agree that Native Hawaiians should receive their due in some form after the damaging impact of years of US rule since Queen Liliukalani was deposed in 1893. It became the fiftieth state of America in 1959. A higher proportion of Native Hawaiians live below the poverty line than any other ethnic group. They have the shortest life expectancy and the highest infant mortality rate; 55 per cent fail to finish school and only 7 per cent have university degrees. Although Native Hawaiians make up about 19 per cent of the population of 1.2 million, they comprise 40 per cent of the state's prison population.

Trask realises that independence is not a realistic option — Hawaii is an important US military base, the headquarters of Cinpac (Commander-in-Chief Pacific) and home to about 60,000 US military personnel.

She envisages sovereignty for Native Hawaiians along the lines of that achieved by Native American tribes on the mainland. The Hawaiian entity would negotiate with the federal government on a range of issues from water rights to land.

Native Hawaiians want to regain control of 2 million acres — half the total acreage of the islands — being held for their benefit by the state in trust after the overthrow of the monarchy. They complain that the benefits are few. "There must be a place where we control land, culture, water, schools," said Trask. "We want to rebuild a place for us to be Hawaiians." — *The Observer*

Letter from Kyoto Jane Norman

Home from home

T*HE* ground-breaking ceremony for Mr Takahashi's new house was held at eight o'clock on a Sunday morning. The ceremony was attended by Mr Takahashi, several of his fiancée's relatives led by her father, representatives of construction companies concerned, and a Shinto priest. A bottle of sake, a bag of rice, and a copy of the Wisdom Sutra were buried with the priest's blessing to pacify the spirits of the earth who would be churned up by the laying of the foundations. Strictly speaking the Wisdom Sutra, being the words of the Buddha, has no business in a Shinto ceremony. Perhaps the idea is to convert the spirits of the earth to more enlightened ways. In ancient times these spirits received a whole human being in compensation, so a bottle of sake and a bag of rice might seem a poor deal in comparison.

Mr Takahashi's new house was to be a reincarnation of his childhood home. This was to be dismantled plank by plank, and hauled to the site by truck to be put together again. Mr Takahashi had been born in a mountain village founded in the Middle Ages by stragglers from a defeated army. They had chosen a spot so inaccessible that it was only just possible to scratch a living in it among herbs and mushrooms.

Mr Takahashi had come down from the mountain years ago to study western philosophy at a university in Kyoto. For many years he basked in imponderables. What is truth? What is beauty? The delights of the realm of thought more than outweighed the discomforts of a six-mat room with neither heating nor plumbing and a diet of soya beans and cold rice balls.

Personnel departments frown upon philosophy graduates. However, as he approached the age of 30 he decided it was time to feather his nest.

He found a job cataloguing books in a university library where intellectual curiosity was not a handicap. The next step was to find a wife. He chose an unassuming librarian from an ancient family whose father had the privilege of riding in the procession for the Festival of the Ages in a carriage pulled by a cow. Such a person was not willing to haud over his daughter in marriage to any Tom, Dick or Harry. A philosopher from an abandoned village was a poor proposition. However times had changed and the daughter was getting on. If Mr Takahashi would provide a roof for the librarian's head, the marriage could take place.

It was the bride's father who had the idea of bringing Mr Takahashi's house down from the mountains and using it again. In this way money would be saved and some good could be said to have come out of his son-in-law's family background. As a wedding present he promised to buy the ground on which the house would stand and asked Mr Takahashi to take his pick among several plots on a new development. Mr Takahashi chose one with a lamppost beside it. He felt that the presence of a lamppost, which would cast light on his property at municipal expense, was the sort of criterion a responsible married man ought to take into consideration.

O*N THE* morning of the ground-breaking ceremony Mr Takahashi was not at his liveliest. The philosophers had taken him out on the town the night before to celebrate his defection to the bourgeoisie.

Mr Takahashi, reflecting through a throbbing head that what passed as real life was a strange business, dug a hole in the ground with a spade. The sacrificial items, housed in a box purchased in the section of a department store which specialised in such ceremonial goods, was placed in the hole and covered with earth. Sake was poured and a toast drunk to the success of the enterprise. It was while Mr Takahashi was filling his father-in-law's cup that he looked up to see the lamppost standing guard over the adjacent site. At that moment he realised that he had brought everyone to the wrong place. They had blessed the plot of ground belonging to his next-door neighbour.

Mr Takahashi felt that nothing would be gained by mentioning his mistake there and then. It was the librarian who undertook to explain matters to her father. Mr Takahashi was despatched to the site to dig up the box and scrape off the mud. A fresh ceremony was arranged with a different priest to officiate. "Western philosophy!" sniffed Mr Takahashi's father-in-law.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

I *HAVE* heard that, at some time in the past, people in China paid their doctor while they remained well. When they became sick, payment was suspended on the basis that the doctor had failed. Is this story true? Could it be adapted to the NHS?

T*HE* Chinese system thrives in the NHS today. As a matter of Government policy, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of GP's pay derived from capitation (that is payment per patient on the doctors list). This means that I can receive 60 per cent of my gross income even if I never have to see a patient. The moment I have to do so it costs me money in ancillary staff pay, heating and lighting my surgery, car costs, etc. It is, therefore, in my interest to cure my patient promptly so that he or she does not have to be seen again. However, this is usually lost on those patients denied a prescription for the antibiotics they think they need for their common cold. — *Dr John Davies, Kirby in Cleveland, North Yorkshire*

I*S IT* ethical to watch a programme on commercial television and not watch the advertisements that pay for it?

N*OT ONLY* ethical, but almost a moral imperative: like the space race, the spin-off from the battle waged between the consumer (clicking between stations, taping, erasing advertisements between programmes) and the advertiser (sliding back into the programme after the commercial break, putting false announcements of the title of the programme in the middle of the break, bunching breaks together as one gets into the swing of a programme) is at the cutting edge of television technology. — *Robin Harte, Mexico City*

M*Y VIDEO* recorder has a skip-the-adverts button, which I pressed the day I bought the recorder and haven't touched since, and a record-only-the-adverts button, which I've never touched. My conscience is clear, since I'm sure there is someone, somewhere, who is using the same technology to watch only the adverts. — *Paul Hardy, Osaka, Japan*

T*HE* day happens to be 24 hours long. We sleep eight hours, work eight hours and relax eight hours. What if the day were 12 hours long? Or 48?

E*VOLUTION* would have designed us accordingly. However, humans are among the only beings whose sleep occurs once a day ("monophasic"); most other animals tend to nap more often and thus have a cycle of less than 24 hours.

Monophasic sleep behaviour is said to have developed among mammals for whom it was not so easy to find a safe place to rest and who could afford to stay awake for a long time because of their lower metabolic rates. Today the 24-hour cycle is simply convenient. With some practice and will-power, we can adapt to a variety of other cycles. — *Frederik Ramm, Karlsruhe, Germany*

W*E WOULD* probably carry on approximately as normal. Having spent over three weeks in 24-hour daylight in Spitsbergen, I experienced a slight slippage of my usual daily cycle, suggesting that my body clock is set to more than 24 hours. — *Peter Gutteridge, Nottingham*

Any answers?

I*S THERE* any single sporting contest longer than the five-day cricket Test match? — ***Tony Allan, Rockingham, Western Australia***

I *REMEMBER* in 1930s Liverpool lighting bonfires in the streets on Good Friday and "burning Judas". Do these activities take place anywhere else? — ***David Hughes, London***

A*RE* there other people who, like the Queen, are heads of state of more than one country? — ***Paul Hayes, Darwin, Australia***

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. Readers with access to the Internet can respond to Notes & Queries via http://go2.guardian.co.uk/nq/

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 8 1996

In search of lost times

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

IT IS unfortunate for Bernardo Bertolucci that Jean Renoir's La Règle du Jeu, the most famous of all country house sagas, has recently been re-released in London. **Stealing Beauty**, set in a villa in Tuscany where the guests must deal with the effect of a beautiful young girl on their variously unsettled psyches, seems slim and almost inconsequential by comparison. It would be fairer to measure the film by the standards of Bertolucci's last two efforts — The Sheltering Sky and Little Buddha. If you do that, Stealing Beauty avoids the admittedly artful pretensions of the first and the holy bombast of the second.

There's a little comedy in Beauty, but not much farce nor tragedy, despite the imminent death of one character. It's more on the ground of Bertrand Tavernier's elegiac Sunday In The Country — where nostalgia, possibly for the frequently imagined glories of youth, co-exists with a detailed portrait of an older generation's neurosis.

The girl (Liv Tyler) is a virgin and we are invited to guess who will be the one to rid her of that apparent inconvenience. Several seem to want to try after she has sensibly refused the offer of the handsome but skirt-chasing young Roberto Zibetti. In the end the task is accomplished. The trouble is, it's quite difficult to feel moved enough to care.

Sensitively directed by Bertolucci, Tyler gives a well-judged and occasionally holding performance. But that isn't enough to sustain the gaze the film fixes upon her, and it isn't until she acts with Jeremy Irons, as the dying guest who befriends her, that we see real quality.

Irons is an actor who doesn't suit everybody. But he can express emotional intensity, and his portrait of a man who sees in her a reflection of his earlier self and a saving grace gives the film the depth it seeks.

Susan Minot's screenplay is serviceable, though it is clear that its intention — and that of the director — is to illuminate not only the gap between generations but also a chilly rootlessness among the veterans of life.

The film is Bertolucci's first in Italy for 15 years and certainly looks good, thanks not only to his direction but also to the limpid cinematography of Darius Khondji, who shot David Fincher's Seven so well. Whether it ultimately does much more than make you want a Tuscan holiday is open to question.

Lee Tamahori's Once Were Warriors was a colourfully dramatic account of contemporary Maori life, like Puccini verismo without the arias. It gripped like a vice. I suppose it was inevitable that Hollywood would claim him. But it wasn't at all inevitable that he would make a movie like **Mulholland Falls**, which looks like it's trying to be Chinatown II but, despite an overlay of film noir style, tends towards the soporific.

Set in the fifties, the film presents us with a posse of LA detectives who, in their determination to keep the city clean, treat would-be gangsters with scant delicacy. They throw them down Mulholland Falls, a steep incline on the LA hills, and generally rough them up in nightclubs.

Their leader is Nick Nolte, looking as if he's been poured into his tight-collared shirt and suit, then given a hat to wear that makes him look even more like a tarted-up dustman. He's in trouble because, though he's nice to his wife (Melanie Griffith), he's also conducting an affair with Jennifer Connolly, a siren with a shady past.

Nolte is devastated when she gets mysteriously totalled, even more so when a gay friend of hers sends him a film of his bedwork with her. There's a nasty conspiracy afoot, to do with the military's ambitions during a period when the A-bomb experiments were giving it more power than was good for it.

The flat surface of the film, glistening with beautiful fifties cars and formal fifties clothes, suggests that Tamahori has gone for an exercise in style that may illuminate the content but might just capsize it. And it does.

I have enormous admiration for Nolte, whatever he looks like. But here he seems a rather too doleful gumshoe straight out of Raymond Chandler, without the fizzing lines.

There are other familiar faces too, such as Michael Madsen, Chris Penn and, in a cameo role, John Malkovich. But nobody can quite transcend a story that simply refuses to take flight.

Nick Broomfield, British documentarist and frustrated feature director, has been scandalising audiences for some 20 years. He took his latest documentary to the Edinburgh Film Festival. **Fetishes**, for which he spent two months in an expensive American S&M house, is his most eye-boggling film to date.

His method is the same as ever. He appears as the total innocent, who doesn't know much about it at all. By the end of the film, he does. And so do we, especially from the pearly lips of Mistress Raven, who suggests that Mr Broomfield needs total restraint. Some might agree, since the purpose of the film seems slightly suspect, however sincere Broomfield's probing questions. It's a remarkable piece of cinema, suggesting there is no end to the flow of human absurdity and that that absurdity crosses the barrier into degradation. What it does to those who give the services is as interesting as why the clients desire them.

Jonathan Romney adds: Andrew Kötting's tour of the British coastline isn't quite heritage cinema, although his eye for island eccentricities is closer to John Betjeman's than the film's wayward, dislocated style would suggest. **Gallivant** is a wilfully arduous slog around some of Britain's less hospitable coastal regions, which Kötting undertook in a camper van, sometimes accompanied by his daughter Eden, who has learning difficulties, and his 90-year-old grandmother, Gladys. The film is partly a melancholic disquisition on their mortality, and Kötting's too: he has a penchant for life-threatening pranks like falling off the side of the moving van, or leaping into a stormy sea ("Silly bugger," comments an unimpressed Gladys).

In fact, Kötting, who has just won the Channel 4 Director Award, seems proud to adhere to the silly-bugger school of film-making. He does seem to have a morbid interest in morris dancing, but mostly he is only too delighted to forget the landscape for a moment or two and chat with a visitor about her bunion, or hang out with a cafe-owner who has done away with table tops. The isle is full of noises, indeed, and Kötting has an idiosyncratic ear for some of the stranger ones.



Losing it . . . Liv Tyler sows discord in Stealing Beauty

Plastic, but not fantastic

ART
Adrian Searle

ONE can never quite trust things made of plastic: it seems somehow too lightweight, too malleable, too extrudable, too versatile and too perfect — as well as too cheap — to be taken entirely seriously. It also always feels too alien to be lovable. And it ages horribly.

Bakelite and polypropylene, polythene and polystyrene, polyvinyl acrylate, methylacrylate and chloride are the gods and goddesses of the modern age. Plastic, at the Richard Salmon gallery in London, is not the first exhibition to survey the artist's use of the stuff — and anyway, all acrylic paintings might be said to be made of it — but, like the material itself, the exhibition is a lightweight, disposable, colourful and useful little show.

The best piece in this amusing collection of works by 26 artists is a small museum display case, beautifully, clunkily constructed out of heavy corrugated cardboard and glued together with sealant. The cabinet contains a selection of everyday plastic bottles on little white-painted cardboard plinths. Called The Collection: Blue, Neil Cummings's display pays homage to containers of bleach, bathroom cleaner and ionised water. All the objects look immaculate, and the labels have been carefully scrubbed off. Everything is coloured or tinted blue and there seems to be a joke in here about Yves Klein, about the Italian painter of still-life Georgio Morandi and New York sculptor Haim Steinbach's arrangements of consumer durables and valuable antiques. But Cumming's work, for all the anonymity of the objects he has chosen, manages, above all, to be itself.

Martyn Last's white-painted reliefs, which include fridge magnets, keyring souvenirs, religious icons and Hong Kong gewgaws, are both nasty and funny — as is Jordan Baseman's set of vampire dentures. Much of the rest of the work revels in plastic's naffness, or takes a ready-made plastic object — like a picnic cooler box — and remakes it in, er, a different kind of plastic, or takes an unregarded but vital plastic semi-industrial item, like a cable clip (the things used for bunging together the spaghetti of trailing wires under office desks) and remakes it, hundreds of times larger than life, out of wood.

The show, while lively enough and fun, is a plastic fantastic version of the Victorian curio cabinet, with its obsessive, retentive attention to collecting and cataloguing one of everything. There's even an elegant puddle of piss made from urine-coloured Perspex. This is arty joke shop poo, via Jean Arp. Jane Simpson's wilted rubber ice-cream cones bring back tearful childhood memories, not only of the cornet dropped on the seaside prom, but of the reek of plastic as one opened one's birthday presents. It was always the smell of disappointment.

Enterprise culture

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

"*THE* bathroom door slides into the wall just like Star Trek," said DJ recently, thrilled by a dilapidated caravan. "Don't you want to see it, Mom?" "No," said Roseanne. "I hate the future."

There was a sliding-door night on BBC2 in honour of **Star Trek**, which is 30 years old. TV itself is only twice as old as that.

I have a nervous interest in Star Trek myself, being a flight-deck officer on the Enterprise. My commission, signed by Gene Roddenberry and James Kirk, starts encouragingly enough and quickly turns quite nasty. "N Banks-Smith, having given proof of superior judgment and abilities and having indicated a willingness to engage in hazardous assignments . . ."

I have no recollection of agreeing anything of the sort. They probably slipped something in my orange juice in the Paramount canteen.

Alfred Hitchcock was there, looking from the side unbelievably like Hitchcock seen sideways, but we all settled like bees around a large crumpled-looking creature, Gene Roddenberry, the creator of Star Trek. "A kinda tall, badly dressed, muttering man," as Herb Solow, executive in charge of the first Star Trek, noticed at their first meeting. He had expected a former cop and pilot to look somehow different.

It was fairly clear from Star Trek Story that Roddenberry wasn't much liked: "He had the reputation of being a real son of a bitch. Nobody wanted to work with him." Well, as Godfrey Winn said about God, "I don't care what they say about Him, He was always perfectly sweet to me."

I remember Roddenberry saying with some force: "Nobody had any faith in Star Trek at first. Nobody!" And, more lightly, telling how he had talked Leonard Nimoy into the ears. Nimoy had objected that (a) he was a serious Shakespearean actor and (b) the TV crew would call him a fairy. Roddenberry promised straight-faced that, if it didn't work out, Dr McCoy could give him an ear job. Nimoy, now so nobly ravaged he could play a face on Mount Rushmore, remembers it differently. He said it was NBC that didn't like the ears.

André Bormanis, astrophysicist, turned into the Paramount lot with the crew of Science: The Final Frontier. He hailed security: "Hi! I'm André Bormanis, the science consultant for the Star Trek series."

"André Who?" glowered the guy with the clipboard.

"Bormanis."

"Would you spell that?"

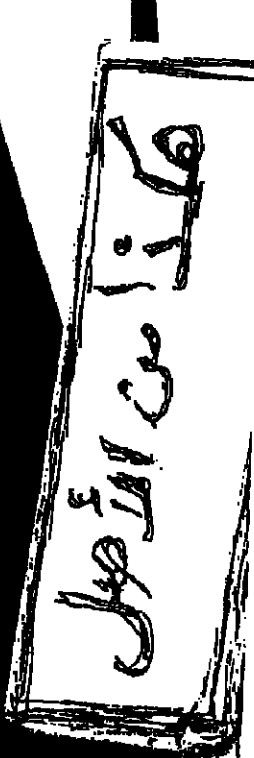
"B . . . O . . ."

Poor André ("Sometimes I feel like a small particle in a very large nucleus") vets Star Trek's science. It has to be plausible, photogenic and, of course, affordable. Real space travel is more like Red Dwarf than Star Trek. Nasa demonstrated hygiene ("The shower is quite nice for people staying in space for months") and cuisine ("This is a thermo-stabilised pouch. The addition of water is made through a septum adaptor assembly"). There was also a touching packet of toffee-coated peanuts, all in bright primary colours for the lost child in the astronaut.

Real scientists are, of course, entirely implausible. I particularly enjoyed the manager of the jet-propulsion lab in his unflattering shower cap ("OK. This is one of four thruster clusters. The thruster clusters are hydrazine thrusters").

There was some entertaining cutting in Science: The Final Frontier. As soon as that iron-band-round-the-brow sensation started, Kate O'Sullivan cut to the crew of the Enterprise for their comforting, reassuring reaction: "Now you've done it, Scotty!" "Ay, the haggis is in the fire for sure!"

("By the way," Roddenberry asked me. "Does Scotty sound Scottish to you?" So I told him. "I did wonder," he said.)



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 8 1996

Walking tall . . . Polish troupe Teatr Biuro Podrozy are back in Edinburgh for a second year with Carmen Funebre in which sinister masked figures on stilts bring home the full horror of war with startling images that mug you from out of the darkness PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

Stepping into a dead woman's shoes

DANCE
Judith Mackrell

WHEN great choreographers die, there are always problems ensuring their work survives them. But a choreographer who has run her own company for more than 60 years also leaves behind the problem of what will happen to her dancers.

Martha Graham postponed this issue for as long as she could, refusing to die until she was 96. During her life she often insisted that her choreography should go with her, yet in the end she decided to take her chances with posterity. She willed her dances and her company to Ron Protas (her companion during her final years). And though as artistic director he has commissioned some works from outside choreographers, the group is essentially a preservation society.

Five years after Martha's death, sustaining her basic style isn't a problem, as she invented a complete classroom technique in which the dancers are still trained. Her blunt, weighted steps, quivering gestures, fated falls and nerve-stretched balances are all instinctive to her company.

But she also believed that "dance is a fever chart of the heart" and her choreography was never just about steps. Today's dancers thus have to be able to get inside the passions that drove the company half a century ago, while the women who dance Graham's own roles have to recreate the intensity of performances that sprang directly out of the hellfires and happiness of her private life.

Edinburgh's [illegible] season, which featured work from between 1916 and 1948, reveals how hard this can be. When Katherine Crockett dances the 1930 solo Lamentation, we see with marvellous clarity the anguished shapes made by the dancer's keening body in its grey jersey shroud. Yet, fine as the dancing is, it lacks the flayed and railing spirit evident in the film of Graham dancing this piece.

Similarly, when Christine Dakin's fists beat the tattoo of Ariadne's terror in Errand Into The Maze (1947) the hairs on the back of our neck don't stand on end.

Yet such misgivings are effortlessly quieted by other performances. Miki Orihara's Mary Magdalene, in the same work, displays a piquant elegance that recalls old photos of Graham, while Gary Galbraith dances the Revivalist in Appalachian Spring (1944) with a mix of doughty hellfire rhetoric and an almost quaint Puritan fastidiousness. In Cave Of The Heart (1946) Dakin's whiplash anger and slithery sensuality become far scarier than in Errand, as her Medea gruesomely feeds off the guts of her own jealousy.

Easily the most successful reconstruction is the 1936 anti-war piece Sketches From Chronicle. Though only three of the original five sections are given and Graham authorised only part of its reconstruction, the combination of diligent research and committed performance makes the work feel as if it's just been made. Terese Capucilli is probably a hotter, more sensuous dancer than Graham was, yet the gestures with which she wrings hope out of horror have a self-sacrificing energy and fierce purity of line that are Martha's legacy.

Scotland's native son loses the plot

James MacMillan had a great subject for his first opera. Pity he wasted it, says **Andrew Clements**

THE premiere of James MacMillan's first full-length opera was keenly awaited and much hyped. It was inevitable that Scottish Opera, which commissioned Inés De Castro, would present it first in Edinburgh, for MacMillan's music has been one of the constants of recent festivals, and his status as Scotland's most visible native composer has been considerably enhanced by such support.

That only sharpened the disappointment. Inés De Castro is a substantial, ambitious work, built out of weighty historical material and genuinely operatic in its aims, but it fails to achieve those aims dramatically or musically. MacMillan himself describes the work as his "most apolitical and secular" to date, and for a composer whose recent music has been enmeshed with his Roman Catholicism and his socialism, that is a significant statement. There may not be a political dimension to this rather gruesome tale from 14th century Portugal, but a religious current still runs through the opera, with liturgical celebrations framing the action, and MacMillan's music studded as ever with references to plainchant.

The libretto is taken from John Clifford's play of the same name, first seen at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. Ines is the Spanish mistress of Pedro, Crown Prince of Portugal, during the country's war with Spain. She is mistrusted at court because she is seen as a threat to its security; when Pedro goes off to fight, the King succumbs to pressure from his adviser Pacheco and agrees to her murder and that of her children.

After the King's death, Pedro exacts his revenge. He has Pacheco tortured and killed, and at his own coronation has the body of Inés exhumed and placed on a throne, compelling his subjects to kiss her hand. Meanwhile the ghost of Inés appears to a young girl, telling her that her death was not necessary, that "there is another way".

What is made of this material, though, is awkwardly plotted and proportioned, tiredly conventional in its approach. MacMillan may be categorised as a postmodernist composer, and therefore allowed carte blanche to ransack the whole of musical history for his expressive needs, but this time he has done it too respectfully.

The dramaturgy would not seem out of place in a Donizetti opera, except that Donizetti would have pruned the wordy text right back to the essentials, made it more graceful to sing and invested the characters with much more depth and sense of development. There is too little of that here: all the protagonists, even Ines herself, are fixed from their first appearances. Her music, one-paced and strenuous, is always on the brink of hysteria; the King's is always sombre and dark; Pedro's always ardent and quasi-heroic.

MacMillan's orchestral score does show much of his usual deftness and imagination. He can conjure images of power, horror or relaxation, he uses the large orchestra expertly, and invokes the ghosts of Wagner, Richard Strauss and Berg in doing so. But the vocal writing is much less convincing, and lapses into sickly sentimentality when the lyricism should be sharper and more yet stylised.

Jonathan Moore's production, designed by Chris Dyer, does what it can to inject some theatricality and pace into events, but knows that it's on a losing wicket from the start. Richard Armstrong conducts the score as vividly as anyone could want, and the Scottish Opera Chorus works very hard to bring the crowd scenes to life. But their efforts, like those of the cast, are not so much wasted as diffused.

A good opera might have been constructed from this mass of material if only MacMillan had allowed himself to stand back and see its outlines more clearly.

Radical reactionary

THEATRE
Michael Billington

IN GERMANY, and throughout most of Europe, Botho Strauss is big news: 400 critics, myself included, lately attended the Munich premiere of his Ithaka. In Britain he has scarcely dented the surface. But Time And The Room, seen last year at the Gate, resurfaces in Edinburgh in a stylish Nottingham Playhouse production, directed by Martin Duncan, that proves Strauss is one of the most cryptically intriguing contemporary playwrights.

In Germany Strauss is notorious for his alleged swing from left to right; and what is fascinating about this play, written in 1988, is that it reveals both sides of his character. In part, it displays an instinctive feminism and applauds the ability of women to defeat patriarchal structures. Yet it also has something of the quirky social pessimism of fifties absurdist writers such as Ionesco.

It is this tension that makes it such an ambiguous play. In the first half we watch as two men sit in a room that is part executive office, part chic art gallery, and gaze wanly at the street below. They observe the restless unease and futility of city life and, as they describe characters from the world outside, so these start to invade their ivory tower.

The dialogue, in Jeremy Sams's translation, is lively but you can't help feeling there is something reactionary about Strauss's despair at the emptiness of reality. "In this life," says one character, "all we've got is our memories. All the rest is looking through the window until we vanish from the face of the earth."

But there is another, more radical side to Strauss that emerges through the central character of Marie Steuber: a constantly shifting, adaptable figure who shows that women contain multiple selves. At times, she seems like Wedekind's Lulu in that she is the creation of male fantasies. At other times, she mercurially re-invents herself: in one fine scene she runs rings round a sweaty potential employer by teasingly pretending to be in love with him.

What the play finally says is anybody's guess; but, in Duncan's production and Anita Dobson's striking performance, the emphasis is very much on female resilience in a disintegrating world. Dobson is sassy, street-smart and stresses, through Marie's multiple shifts of identity, a tough-minded independence.

But the production also brings out Strauss's humour: most especially through the exchanges of the beige-suited window-gazing Julius and Olaf, played, respectively, by Tyrone Huggins and John Ramm as a cool dude and a quivering neurotic. There is also immaculate design and lighting by Wolfgang Gobbel who creates an hygienic white space that becomes a vehicle for *trompe l'oeil* effects. Even on a third viewing the play sometimes baffles; but at its heart lies an intriguing contest between Strauss's loathing of our consumerist culture and his radical belief in the multi-facetedness of woman.

Bullied into life by a piano

MUSIC
Andrew Clements

***THE* near-absence of contemporary music in the Festival programme was redeemed by a magical, intense concert of three works by György Kurtág. The event marked the composer's 70th birthday, and included that rare thing, a Kurtág premiere, for he has always worked obsessively slowly.**

The new piece, Songs Of Despair And Sorrow, is Kurtág's Op 18. The songs are settings for mixed choir of six Russian poems presented in strict chronological order from Lermontov to Tsvetayeva, and growing ever bleaker and more despairing. The voices are supported by an ensemble that includes four accordions and two harmoniums. The effect is austere, unblinking and monumentally powerful; the performance by the Edinburgh Festival Singers and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra conducted by David Jones was scrupulous and exact.

Kurtág himself had begun the concert with his wife Marta in a selection of his ongoing collection of piano-duet miniatures, Játékok, framing them with his own arrangement of a Bach sonatina, in a fragile, bewitching sequence.

He was also the pianist, this time on an upright, in the extraordinary Samuel Beckett: What Is The Word? It was composed in 1990 for the actress Ildikó Monyók, who delivered it here, part spoken, part sung; the inspiration was her struggle to regain her speech after a car accident. The piano does not so much accompany the voice as bully and cajole it into life, shadowing the text syllable by syllable as it struggles for expression. The process is discomfiting and utterly compelling.

Eliot's notebook of revelations

Some 70 years ago, T S Eliot gave a notebook to a friend. The poems in it have now come to light. Report by **Eric Griffiths**

IN 1927, T S Eliot politely turned down a batch of manuscript poems which the young W H Auden had sent to Faber and Faber, where the senior poet was an editor: "I do not feel any of the enclosed is quite right." Eliot didn't often receive such letters from publishers himself because he simply wrote the rejection-slips for his own work. He did this for the Inventions of the March Hare — "not worth publishing". But these, in his own words, "sets of verse which . . . never ought to be printed" have now been matchlessly edited by Christopher Ricks and issued by Faber, in a volume evidently worth publishing because so eminently worth owning.

Holding the book is like holding a long-lost map to a treasure-trove; many of these poems have been buried for 90 years. Brought to light again, they glitter startlingly: there be dragons here, as also comedians, a strangler fond of his victims' ears, useless professors and worse-than-useless journalists — plus a version of Columbus's voyage so packed with sexual incident that it's remarkable he ever survived to discover America. Those with quieter tastes may be interested, too, in the book's meticulous record of the development of the writer Yeats called "the most revolutionary man in poetry during my lifetime". One reason these poems remain revolutionary in our own lifetimes is that Eliot, to a large extent, invented our contemporary ears and minds.

As a young man, he had bought for 25 cents a leather-bound notebook while he was holidaying on the New England coast — whose waves, navigational hazards and bird-song inform his poetry from almost first to almost last. He carried this notebook with him on his travels between 1909 and 1917, ranging from Boston through Paris and Munich to Oxford and London, and wrote in it drafts of most of his published poems up to The Waste Land, along with more than 40 pieces he never released. Late in the summer of 1922, he offered the New York lawyer, John Quinn, in thanks for Quinn's support, the working-papers for The Waste Land. Quinn accepted the gift, on condition he might buy a second manuscript Eliot had mentioned, the Inventions Of The March Hare, for which he paid $140.

Quinn died two years later, and Eliot never thereafter knew what had happened to the parcel. The documents were eventually purchased by the New York Public Library in 1958 but this was not announced until 1968, three years after the poet's death. His widow Valerie Eliot brought out The Waste Land materials in 1971; this is the sibling collection to that book of revelations.

We can see why Eliot might have thought none of the poems first published here "quite right", and why he therefore held them back — while simultaneously being glad indeed that Mrs Eliot has sanctioned their appearance at last. Inventions Of The March Hare prints some 20 poems or sequences of poems written between the Novembers of 1909 and 1911, the years in which Eliot also composed "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "Portrait of a Lady" and those four, great little poems, "Preludes".

What, then, is the difference between the "new" pieces and the well-known published works? They share many turns of cadence, phrase and thought. To name but a few : "the corner of the street", "withered leaves," "vacant lots", "masquerades", "blackened", "certainties". The iron-filings of Eliot's imagination lie all around in heaps but without the magnet needed to spring them into pattern. Nothing in the notebook quite manages to become "The worlds revolve like ancient women / Gathering fuel in vacant lots" ("Preludes", IV).

It is the thought of "ancient women" which does the trick, those orbiting derelicts on the rummage through a chilly universe. When it glances at what growing old might do to women, the notebook never rises above such



Inventor of contemporary ears and eyes . . . T S Eliot at Faber in 1956 PHOTO: IDA KAR

pained simpers as "Two ladies of uncertain age" or "A lady of almost any age".

Men, on the other hand, and Eliot in particular, age at a great rate in these new poems: "I feel", he writes about a month after his 21st birthday, "like the ghost of youth / At the undertakers' ball" ("Opera"). It may be one of youths' solemnities to think that life has passed them by when in fact it's barely started on them, but there is more to Eliot's wry sensations that all is *déja vécu* than such repining before your time. A writer is as old not as he but as his language feels; for an artist like Eliot whose heart was in his work, poetry itself intones with Prufrock "I grow old . . . I grow old . . .".

Yet the Inventions Of The March Hare repeatedly looks for something to do with the nothing-new, as the poet recurs to the word "again" — "these fields that hold and rack the brain / (What: again?)". Eliot wrote during the first world war that "while the mind of man has altered, verse has stood still"; these poems show him trying to jog the lyrical needle out of the groove it was stuck in but only producing, time after time, "a new assertion of the ancient pain".

HE REMEMBERED in 1961 that "the stirrings of desire to write verse were becoming insistent" at the time of these poems. Those words recall The Waste Land's cruellest month, April — "mixing / Memory and desire, stirring / Dull roots with spring rain". The recall suggests how far the reaches of a longing to write went in Eliot, and how that longing may imply other thirsts to be fertile, all summed up as "rain". These poems tingle with a frustration indistinguishably philosophical and sexual at once — so indistinguishable that neither "philosophical" nor "sexual" is the right word for their strains.

For example, in "Embarquement pour Cythère", named after Watteau's painting of an idyllic jaunt, the poem turns, around the words "as clear as day", from imagining a mildly erotic spree to dreams of sweet, conceptual solutions. It is as if — were it asked, "what's *your* problem?" — the poem might answer either "the relation of the One to the Many" or "my relationship with the blonde in the corner", depending how the mood took it. The poem gives itself a French title because of the tradition of the *poésie des départs*, the wistful celebration of impossible journeys to brighter lands, their routes created for Eliot by predecessors such as Laforgue and Baudelaire.

Yet as Eliot recognised, there is nothing more clichéd than the desire for fresh starts, no commodity more often sold than a brand-new tune. The poetry of departures, he knew to his cost as a modern writer, is also a poetry of department stores, those glassy embodiments of the fool's paradise invented in the 19th century. Before and since, hope has staggered in the human breast. As Eliot more complexly put it in an essay on Baudelaire, there is this "sadness . . . due to the exploitation of the fact that no human relations are adequate to human desires, but also to the disbelief in any further object for human desires than that which, being human, fails to satisfy them."

His astounding powers of memory made the early Eliot feel old; he remembered what previous writers had written and, because he responded so vividly to their writing, their words recalled for him things that other people had desired. It was not himself alone he overheard when he realised that he was saying something that had been said before, nor only his own feelings that stirred him. Hence the odd spectacle in these poems of a distinctly new poetic voice worrying that it sounds hackneyed. In Professor Ricks, Eliot has an editor whose verbal attentiveness and imagination approach, as nearly as a critic's can, the poet's own. The edition's notes record, with fabulous wealth of detail, how Eliot grew into himself through making ever deeper his debts to those who wrote before him; they are more valuable as literary history than any guided tour of "modernism" could be.

When Ezra Pound met Eliot, he exploded in rapture to Harriet Monroe, who ran the most up-to-date of poetry magazines: "He has actually trained himself *and* modernized himself *on his own*. . . . It is such a comfort to meet a man and not have to tell him to wash his face, wipe his feet, and remember the date [1914] on the calendar." (Eliot's letter about their first meeting keeps its powder drier: "Pound is rather intelligent as a talker; his verse is well-meaning but touchingly incompetent.") It is hard to imagine Eliot ever needing advice on personal hygiene, and he was never so moved by calendars as Pound, but Pound had seen and heard something which mattered, and which can be seen and heard in this wonderful edition's drafts of poems such as "Prufrock". We follow Eliot through these pages in his striving to get the poems quite right. The work was minutely difficult, but will seem trivial only to those who have no ear for verse.

For instance, "Prufrock" in the notebook version wonders:

Then how should I begin?
— To spit out all the butt ends of my days and ways?
But how should I presume?

In the published version, Eliot had to reject the grinding of "butt ends" against "But". "But" became "And" by the time the poem was published in 1915, just brushing "ends" with the clipped assonance of "And".

Art depends on such changes. Eliot would make dozens of alterations before he freed his lines into their unique world of humour and dread, finding how to write English in rhythms newly tenuous and unforeseeably dense. It required in Eliot a great capacity for self-dissatisfaction — a patience raised to such a fever-pitch that, watching him at it, we realise why the words "intense apathy" in this notebook are not at all a contradiction in terms.

Embarquement pour Cythère†

Ladies, the moon is on its way!
Is everybody here?
And the sandwiches and ginger beer?
If so, let us embark —
The night is anything but dark,
Almost as clear as day.

It's utterly illogical
Our making such a start, indeed
And thinking that we must return.

Oh no! why should we not proceed
(As long as a cigarette will burn
When you light it at the evening star)
To porcelain land, what avatar
Where blue-delft-romance is the law.

Philosophy through a paper straw!

III
On every sultry afternoon
Verandah customs have the call
White flannel ceremonial
With cakes and tea
And guesses at eternal truths
Sounding the depths with a silver spoon
And dusty roses, crickets, sunlight on the sea
And all.

And should you ever hesitate
Among such charming scenes —
Essence of summer magazines —
Hesitate, and estimate
How much is simple accident
How much one knows
How much one means
Welll among many apophthegms
Here's one that goes —
Play to your conscience, through the maze
Of means and ways
And wear the crown of your ideal
Bays
And rose.

IV
Among the débris of the year
Of which the autumn takes its toll: —
Old letters, programmes, unpaid bills
Photographs, tennis shoes, and more.
Ties, postal cards, the mass that fills
The limbo of a bureau drawer —
Of which October takes its toll
Among the débris of the year
I find this headed "Barcarolle":

"Along the wet paths of the sea
A crowd of barking waves pursue
Bearing what consequence to you
And me.
The neuropathic winds renew
Like marionettes who leave their graves
Walking the waves
Bringing the news from either Pole
Or knowledge of the fourth dimension:
"We beg to call to your attention
"Some minor problems of the soul."

— Your seamanship is very neat
You scan the clouds, as if you knew,
Your language nautical, complete;
There's nothing left for me to do.
And while you give the wheel a twist
I gladly leave the rest to fate
And contemplate
The aged sybil in your eyes
At the four crossroads of the world
Whose oracle replies: —
"These problems seem importunate
But after all do not exist."

Between the theoretic seas
And your assuring certainties
I have my fears:
— I am off for some Hesperides
Of street pianos and small beers!

† 'Embarquement pour Cythère', being the second part of a provisional sequence entitled 'Goldfish (Essence of Summer Magazines)', followed by parts III and IV; from Inventions Of The March Hare, by T S Eliot, edited by Christopher Ricks (Faber, £30)

Gunpowder, treason and plot

Andrew O'Hagan

The Gunpowder Plot: Terror and Faith in 1605
by Antonia Fraser
Weidenfeld & Nicholson 347pp £20

JAMES I was a cowardly lion rampant. Fearful of assassination, worried about the plague, he roamed through the forests of Arden in the company of his Scottish friends, chasing after deer, whilst desperations bubbled and stewed around his London throne.

The King of Scots had been carried south in 1603 — buoyant, bountiful — on a sea of whispers about the coming toleration for Catholics, and he made his double throne secure with such rumour. We can take him to have been the king of plotters, as well as a king among them. He pacified the Spanish; he spoke diplomatically of live-and-let-live at home and abroad and he let his Danish wife be a Catholic in private. But then everything changed utterly, and James came down on the Catholics like a ton of bricks.

Guy Fawkes tends to get all the credit (or debit) for the plot which followed on these sad political manoeuvres — a plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament, with the Royal Family, their servants and ministers in attendance — but he was really just the bloke who went down to light the fuse. He was caught in the cellars, skulking about nervously in a cloak and wide hat, and he revealed some of the names of his co-conspirators only after two days of torture on the rack.

The solitary Fawkes was born in York, and he went to St Peter's School, where his schoolmates included boys who would later appear on the charge-sheet for the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. His father was a Protestant, from a line of public servants, but his mother was from recusant stock. Fawkes would later flee to the Spanish Netherlands, there to fight as a mercenary and to enjoy the sacraments freely. He would in time try to raise interest in Spain for a Catholic invasion of England: he pressed that English Catholics were, if anything, in a worse predicament under James I than under the pasty-faced Elizabeth. But the Spanish favoured diplomacy, and responded to the same. They also believed the Pope when he said that James might eventually convert, if left to himself. So Guy Fawkes went home to think again, and his thoughts were greeted by others thinking in the same vein, keen to make collective action of their mental turns.

Antonia Fraser is good and clear on the secretive, persecuted lives of English Catholics at the turn of the 16th century. There is precision in her account of recusant households, with their many hidey-holes for priests, their hidden candles and loyal servants, and a gentle blend of sympathy and curiosity is evident in the telling.

But there is a problem here. Lady Antonia, a Catholic herself, is not above the temptation to allow soothing, absolving and finally iniquitous waters to flow over the wounds of her blessed powder plotters, some of whom were just crazy for blood and revenge, and many of whom were in two minds about where the good and the bad lay in their enterprise. There is a devout bias running in favour of these men throughout Fraser's book, which would be all right were it enough that they simply be considered martyrs of their day. But that is not the plan. It would appear they are to be considered freedom fighters and persecuted minorities in the modern mode. Thus they become icons of the noble struggle against tyrannical government and the totalitarian state; their voice is that of innocents everywhere who set themselves against the savage machinations of intolerant powers.



ILLUSTRATION: GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

THIS holy blether starts early in the book. In the acknowledgments, in fact, where Harold Pinter, the author's husband, is praised for "his characteristic generous sympathy for the oppressed". You know how, in romantic fiction of a certain stamp, the sturdily courageous hero is always healthy and good looking? Well so it is here, where he (Robert Catesby, the leader of the plot, not Harold) is described in terms of his "magnetism": so "obviously Catesby's handsome appearance was part of his glamour. He was six feet tall . . ." and so on. And where Jack Wright had "pleasing features", Kit had "a healthy, ruddy face". And Sir Everard Digby was "the darling of the court" for his "handsome face, athletic figure and height". No wonder the nuns wept for 250 years after this Jacobean Boyzone were each hung, drawn and quartered.

It is with this form of burnishing that Fraser sets up the larger business of canonisation. For it was these brave and handsome men who were to answer the lament of "the outcast minority throughout history who find a special cruelty in being persecuted in their native land". Now we're rolling. And the holy invocation goes out to Asian immigrant outcries in the 1960s against the racist British; to those who rose in defiance in the Ireland of 1916; to those Iraqi civilians who were bombed in Baghdad during Desert Storm; and to the flower-powerists of the sixties, who chose not to bomb their way out of oppression (though some of them did).

In this mêlée of invocation and analogy, a huge respect gathers for the plotters, who went to the scaffold for their claims upon freedom, and who, above all, died Catholics. "Nothing that had happened", writes Fraser aglow, "had caused them to abandon the religion for which they had sacrificed their liberty and finally their lives." Well, that's the main thing. Less does it matter that their vain and crazy plot resulted in the torture and execution of Catholics for generations to come. But that is just another way of looking at it. Antonia Fraser makes latterday saints of these foolish boys, and that is her way.

Fraser has the charm of good organisation, and her story is ruthlessly unboring. The question of the Monteagle letter (which sprung the whole affair, in the manner of an anonymous tip-off) is one that she handles well. Was the whole thing a set-up by Lord Monteagle to clear himself of any terrible association with the bombers? Was the cunning Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, engaged in a complex project to raise himself in the eyes of the King? John Bossy's book on Giordano Bruno and Charles Nicholl's work on Christopher Marlowe offered an Elizabethan world picture which chimed with our own century's obsession with the endless fantasia of conspiracy and counter conspiracy.

Antonia Fraser does not go that far, but she sees the exquisite potential in the odd details of the Powder Plot for small chimings of this sort. This is the sort of parallel between the plotters' world and our own which can make new sense of things. Her book is all the better for it, and all the worse for those depressing mummerings on behalf of the oppressed and the Rosary-beaded.

Mother's boy and gentleman

John Sturrock

The Man in the Mirror of the Book: A Life of Jorge Luis Borges
by James Woodall
Hodder & Stoughton 333pp £20

BORGES died 10 years ago, and now the biographers are massing. James Woodall's modest, penny-plain Life is the first to appear of the 14 said to be in the making. They won't all be in English, but it is an absurd number even so, especially when the subject is someone who read (until he went blind), wrote and talked, and that's about all.

Borges never had a proper job and, unlike his soldier ancestors, he ran no risks. He was a sufferer, not a doer, and a biographer can but set the wit and quiet playfulness of the writing against a chronic bleakness and anxiety in the living. This Woodall does well enough, reporting on Borges's intimate inadequacies without trying to explain them. The main trouble seems to have been Mother, who shared apartments with him, preoccupied him emotionally and lived unrelentingly on, dying only when her son was 76. The incurably virginal Borges flirted with but then quickly dropped other women. In his late sixties there was a silly marriage that lasted for three hopeless years until he walked away from it — literally: he left one morning for the National Library and did not come back.

Woodall's book is simplistic on the literary side of Borges, at its most interesting on the geographical, when it describes what went on socially and politically around him in Buenos Aires. In his 20s and into his 30s Borges was something of an experimentalist, a vehement, even Whitmanesque poet and a literary theorist inspired by the seven years he had earlier spent in Europe.

He was rising 40 before he turned to writing the incomparably subtle metafictions of Ficciones and The Aleph. And it took another 20 years for these stories to become known to the literary world at large. Borges, until then a cosmopolitan intelligence shut away in a provincial setting, had come into his empire at the age of 60, by when he could at least feel secure from the intrusions on his privacy behind the twin defences of his blindness and his irony.

Borges was never political, but he could hardly ignore politics as Argentina went venally or brutally downhill through regime after regime. Perón was the end, "the Unspeakable" as Borges called him, a crude demagogue and pro-German through the 1939-45 war, whereas Borges, for whom England was a second, literary homeland, longed for Hitler to lose. Perón's return to power in 1973 was the last straw.

Woodall would have it that he was, in his politics, not the "anarchist" he often claimed he was, but an "old buffer". He wanted leaders who were "gentlemen": Castro wasn't a gentleman so Borges trashed him; Pinochet was one so Borges accepted a decoration from him. Folly more than provocation surely, and richly made up for by his definitive comment on the Falklands war that it reminded him of "two bald old men fighting over a comb".

By bringing that grotesque war about, Borges's two homelands had both betrayed him. Four years later he chose to go back to Europe to die. His grave is in Geneva, and the two inscriptions on it are written, the one in Anglo-Saxon, the other in Old Norse. That is as close as Borges was prepared to come to belonging.

Eros hawks his wares

Richard Gott

The Double Flame: Essays on Love and Eroticism
by Octavio Paz
translated by Helen Lane
Harvill 206pp £14.99 & £8.99 (pbk)

OCTAVIO Paz is one of the great European cultural icons of the 20th century before whom we all perforce bow down and worship. He is a poet beyond praise, a critic beyond criticism, and an essayist whose insights illuminate our mediocre culture with the gorgeous richness of a stained-glass window. Yet he speaks to us from afar. His bell-like voice chimes uneasily with the idiom of contemporary cultural studies. It comes to us from the almost forgotten classical renaissance world of our childhood, bearing a message that seems to belong to an earlier century.

Yet if the context seems archaic, the content of his latest book is resolutely up to date. How are we to conceive of the timeworn themes of love and beauty, he asks, in an era of mass consumption? The concepts themselves have been taken over for overtly commercial use. High on his agenda is the current debasement of eroticism. "Capitalism," he writes dolefully, "has turned Eros into an employee of Mammon." Paz takes us in pursuit of these flames, pointing up their immense power and significance.

He concludes sadly that the power of love has almost been extinguished by the twin evils of promiscuity and money.

Paz is magnificent in his denunciations, noting bitterly how political parties — the agents of democracy — "have turned into bureaucratic steamrollers and powerful cabals".

Yet while his analysis of what has been happening is original, his solutions are curiously familiar: "The ills that afflict modern society are political and economic, but they are moral and spiritual as well, threatening the foundation of our civilisation — the idea of the human person." Only in the regenerative power of love can these evils be overcome.

One of the great virtues of Octavio Paz is his resolute humanism. Where others would put God, Paz puts love. Faced with the degeneration of our politics, he appeals to "the creative imagination of our philosophers, artists and scientists to rediscover not what is most distant but what is most near and everyday."

Strangers in the night air

Mark Cocker

AS I WAITED by the River Yare towards dusk a single fisherman was also busy settling in, arranging what seemed a number of fairy lanterns around his evening's pitch. Just 30 minutes later and we were alone. It was silent, while his was the only source of light in the entire landscape, a glow just strong enough to illuminate the penumbra of tackle, nets, bait boxes and flasks orbiting his solitary chair.

Then the bats I had come to see started to appear. Even when you can examine them in detail in their roost sites, bats can be difficult to identify. In flight they are largely a matter of guesswork although these were probably a mixture of noctules and Daubenton's, the latter having one of their largest national colonies close by.

It is curious how even today bat conservationists have found it difficult to dispel their subjects' associations with witchcraft and general evil. Even tribal people like the Amerindians, icons for the New Age environmentalists, can have a deeply negative image of bats. In the creation myth of the Desana of north-west Amazonia, for instance, they are described as "a thing of filth", treated with the same level of affection as centipedes and large black spiders. For the Apache of the southwest United States a bite from a bat could put an end to a man's horse-riding days, while any attempt to mount up thereafter was believed to be almost certain death.

Ridiculous though these myths may seem, they are not too far from the misconceptions that continue to circulate in Britain. A survey conducted less than a decade ago with more than 5,000 respondents revealed that half still thought bats were blind. Three-quarters thought that the creatures often get caught up in human hair, while a third believed that they cause damage to buildings by clogging lofts up with their nests or even removing tiles to gain access. In fact a colony of 70 pipistrelles would probably take up little more space than a single house brick. And when one realises that the noctules I was watching, which are Britain's biggest bats, weigh just 40 grams one realises the improbable nature of them moving roof tiles.


ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

FOR BAT enthusiasts the deep prejudice their favourite creatures still arouse must seem just one more facet of the wider ignorance that surrounds them. Much still remains to be discovered about bat distribution, status, social life and behaviour. Even last year it was discovered that populations of pipistrelle bats separated by a mere range of hills, the Pennines, are now probably two distinct species.

Even the bats I followed as they quartered high over the river showed behaviour that is not fully understood. The deep action of the noctule's wings gives their flight a distinctive sense of purpose. Periodically, however, this routine would be broken by a dramatic plunge as the bat twisted and turned after a fleeing moth. In order to confuse the echo-location system by which bats find and catch their prey, it is known that some moths literally stop flying and fall earthward in order to escape.

Another intriguing speculation surrounds flying beetles that would be unpleasant to bats if they were eaten. It has been suggested that the insect's surface iridescence affects the manner in which the bat's high frequency signals bounce off the beetle's body and these indicate its distastefulness. The idea that a bat that can literally hear the flavour of a beetle seems an extraordinary concept, and rather like the fisherman who knows how best to cook his catch from the way the fish plays his line.

Chess Leonard Barden

GIANT-KILLING wins over top opponents are just the stuff of dreams to most players, particularly as the élite rarely steps outside the tight-knit circuit of invitation all-play-alls. But they do occasionally happen, and this game from the Frankfurt Open is a good example of the psychology involved.

Alexei Shirov is world class, for sure; but the Latvian who now lives in Spain has a chronic urge to flirt with danger and to choose sharp and risky opening systems. His little-known opponent here has a Fide rating of only 2,240 against Shirov's 2,690, a difference equal to 56 British grading points. Moreover, Shirov had the favourable white pieces.

The best chance in such games is a tactical mêlée, so Reinemer opened with the counter-attacking and provocative Dutch Defence.

Shirov soon sacrificed material, and his queen and bishop probed for a long diagonal mate. After it was blocked, Reinemer launched decisive back row tactics with 24 . . . f4!

A Shirov v F Reinemer

1 d4 f5 2 g3 Nf6 3 Bg2 g6 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 0-0 0-0 6 b3 d6 7 Bb2 c6 8 Nbd2 Na6 9 c4 Better 9 Qc1 to guard the B and stop Black's freeing tactic.

e5 10 dxe5 Ng4 11 Ba3?! 11 h3 Nxe5 12 Qc2 is level.

Nxe5 12 Nxe5 Bxe5 13 Nf3?! Bxa1 14 Qxa1 Qe7 15 Qd4 c5 16 Qc3 h6 17 Bb2 Kh7 18 Rd1 Nc7 19 Rxd6 Ne8 Of course not Qxd6?? but now g7 and h8 are guarded so Shirov has to fish for a second pawn.

20 Rd5 Be6 21 Re5 Rd8 22 Qe3 Rd1+ 23 Bf1 Ng7 24 Rxc5 Mission accomplished; but now comes the decisive blow. **f4! 25 gxf4 Bh3 26 Nd2** If 26 Qxe7? Rxf1 mate.

Qxe3 27 fxe3 Rxd2 28 Bc3 Rd1 29 Resigns.

Chris Ward won the British Championship at Nottingham in fine style last month, leading the field throughout and making a score of 9/11.

C Ward v A Summerscale

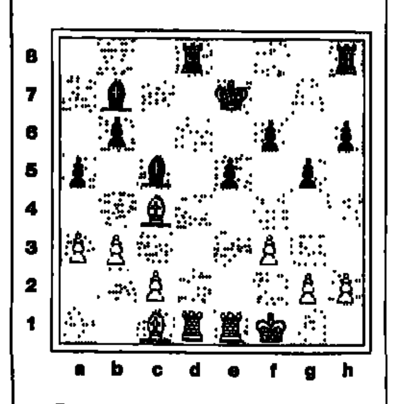
1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 dxc4 4 e4 b5 5 a4 b4 6 Nb1?! Safer is 6 Na2, regaining the pawn.

Ba6 7 Nf3 Nf6 8 e5 Nd5 9 Ng5 h6 10 Qh5 hxg5! 11 Qxh8 Nf4 12 Be3 Qd5 13 f3 Ne6?! Black has played well to here, and 13 . . . c5! gives good compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

14 Nd2 Nxd4 15 0-0-0 c3 16 Nc4 Bxc4?? "Completely missing White's idea. I felt like a complete idiot," wrote Summerscale.

17 Rxd4 Qxe5 18 Qxf8+! Resigns.

No 2437



Peter Leko v Michael Adams, Dortmund 1996. White's negative play has given Adams a space advantage, and after 1 . . . h5 2 Be3 Bxe3 3 Rxd8 Rxd8 4 Rxe3 Rd1+ 5 Re1 Rd2 he won a fine ending; but can you spot the double blunder in this move sequence?

No 2436: 1 Rh6. If cxb6 2 Rxf6 b5(Kc4 3 Rxc6) 3 Qd4. If 1 . . . Kd6 2 Qe5+! Kxe5 3 Nc4 mate.

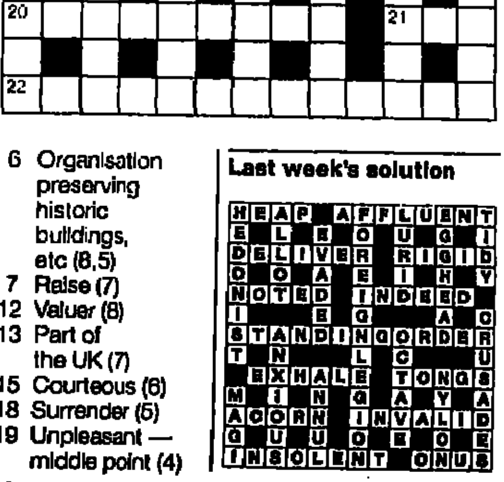
Quick crossword no. 330

Across

1 Watching the show (2,3,8)
8 Study — animal's lair (3)
9 Take to pieces (9)
10 Scornful (8)
11 Settee (4)
13 Develop (6)
14 Get away from (6)
16 Clothing — selected by motorists? (4)
17 Midlands city — one may be sent here! (8)
20 Running, jumping, throwing, etc (9)
21 Employ (3)
22 Broke up (13)

Down

1 River in South Asia (5)
2 Canned fruit (6,7)
3 Permanent (8)
4 Not acclaimed (6)
5 Islamic priest (4)
6 Organisation preserving historic buildings, etc (8,5)
7 Raise (7)
12 Valuer (8)
13 Part of the UK (7)
15 Courteous (6)
18 Surrender (5)
19 Unpleasant — middle point (4)



Last week's solution

HEAP AFFLUENT
E L E O U G I
DELIVER RIGID
O O A E I H Y
NOTED INDEED
I E G A C
STANDINGORDER
T N L C U
EXHALE TONGS
M I N G A Y A
ACORN INVALID
G U U O E O E
INSOLENT ONUS

Bridge Zia Mahmood

THE GREAT American player Edgar Kaplan has a maxim: "Take out your partner's takeout doubles." I wonder what Edgar would make of today's deal. Boye Brogeland and Oyvind Saur of Norway, who won the gold medal in the under-25 section of the recent Junior European Championships, were West and East respectively. Look at the West cards and decide what action you would take at various stages:

♠Q76 ♥A42 ♦J965 ♣942

South on your right deals and opens with a pre-emptive three diamonds at love all. You and North both pass, and your partner reopens with a takeout double. What action do you take after South has passed?

This is a pretty horrible decision. If you bid, what will you bid? One of your three-card major suits? Three no trumps, perhaps? Any of these actions may well attract a punishing double from the North player, and the penalty you suffer could be worse than letting the opponents make three diamonds doubled.

So perhaps you should pass. You have a couple of tricks in defence, it is true, but your partner does not have to hold very much for his double. After all, he was in the protective position. But remember what Kaplan says: "Takeout doubles are for takeout!" If, like Brogeland, you decide to pass the opponents out in three diamonds doubled, what will you lead? A trump is very dangerous, but all of the other three suits are candidates. Your partner's double of three diamonds will usually be based on good holdings in the majors, so perhaps a spade — or even a risky heart away from the ace — is preferable to a club. Make your choice before you read on.

	North ♠KJ532 ♥KJ9 ♦32 ♣A87	
West ♠Q76 ♥A42 ♦J965 ♣942		East ♠A4 ♥Q1085 ♦7 ♣KQJ1063
	South ♠1098 ♥763 ♦AKQ1084 ♣5	

South	West B'land	North	East Saur
3♦	No	No	Dble
No	No	No	

Brogeland led a heart! His reasoning was that since South appeared to hold a good diamond suit, he would be very unlikely also to have the king of hearts. If East had that card the lead of a heart might work very well. And if North had the king of hearts, the lead might work even better! If you look at the full deal (see table), you will see just how much better.

Not believing for a moment that his opponent had underled an ace at trick one, declarer finessed dummy's nine of hearts and East won it with the ten. Saur returned the king of clubs to dummy's ace. South played a diamond to his ace and cashed the king, discovering that he had a loser in the suit, then ran the ten of spades. East won with the ace and tried the queen of clubs, ruffed by South who played queen and another diamond.

Winning with his jack, Brogeland once again underled the ace of hearts! And once again declarer misguessed, putting in the jack and losing to the queen. A heart back to the ace meant one down, and earned Brogeland a prize for the best defence of the championships. ©

Motor Racing

Williams leave Hill in limbo

Alan Henry

DAMON HILL has already begun the task of seeking a drive for the 1997 season after his public sacking by Williams on Sunday. His advisers have opened negotiations with Jordan and McLaren and a discreet approach has also been made to Jackie Stewart, who once partnered Hill's father Graham at BRM and who will field a Ford-backed Formula One squad for the first time next year.

Although such a partnership would capture the public imagination, Stewart is cautious: "I would dearly love to have Damon in the team," he said last week, "but I don't think we could afford him."

Jordan's commercial manager Ian Phillips said: "We are amazed that Damon has been released by Williams, and up to the weekend hadn't even considered he would be available for 1997. Now that he is, we must reappraise our situation and plans."

Hill: bad timing

Frank Williams delivered the news to Hill's camp last week, informing his solicitor Michael Breen that he was withdrawing from the contractual negotiations. He said the reason was not financial although Hill had been seeking a rise in his $8 million-a-year retainer.

"It was a bolt from the blue," said Breen. "When we were negotiating for this season, Frank said to Damon, 'Let's see what happens. If you win the championship, you know I have already lost enough world champions and been berated by my sponsors. I would never, ever do that again.' Is that good enough?"

That was a reference to Nigel Mansell's acrimonious departure in 1992, which was followed by Alain Prost's exit a year later when Ayrton Senna was recruited against the Frenchman's will. Both men left Williams as reigning world champions.

What Williams did not say is that there was never any chance of retaining Hill, the current world championship points leader, for 1997 since a deal had already been struck for the German driver Heinz-Harald Frentzen to race alongside Hill's current team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, next season. This scenario has been consistently denied by the team.

Cricket Third one-day international: England v Pakistan

England denied a clean sweep

Mike Selvey at Trent Bridge

IF the first two one-day internationals had been strolls in the park for England, with Pakistan finding neither the will nor the energy to raise their game after winning the Test series, the final international match of the summer turned into altogether more dramatic fare.

Stung perhaps by their ineptitude at Old Trafford and Edgbaston — they lost by five wickets and 107 runs respectively — Pakistan fielded an experimental young side and won the final match by two wickets with two deliveries to spare.

Such was their collective spirit that Tom Graveney, in one of the more bizarre decisions of its type, gave the Man of the Match award to all 11 Pakistan players.

The match ended in a frenetic half-hour of missed run-outs, scampered runs and clouds of dust as batsmen dived to the crease. At the death it was the wicketkeeper Rashid Latif who carried the day when he chipped the fourth ball of Adam Hollioake's final over into the space over mid-off's head.

With the scores level he could have blocked the last three deliveries to ensure victory by fewer wickets down but he chose to hurtle through like a missile.

Latif and the young offspinner Saqlain Mushtaq had needed six runs from the final over and they did not make the best of starts. Saqlain swung at the first ball and Matthew Maynard took a studious catch at long-on. This left Latif on strike, however, and he reduced the target by two when he clipped the next ball to long-leg and beat Mullally's throw, which was too high.

Mike Atherton immediately sent Nick Knight to patrol that area instead but it was too late. The next ball sealed the game. Hollioake had coped well with the pressures of limited-overs cricket and taken eight wickets in two days but his next ball was all wrong. It was a sumptuous long hop outside off stump which Latif, scarcely believing his luck, lacerated square to an unprotected boundary.

Earlier Latif had been fortunate to survive a run-out call after taking a sharp single only to be sent back by Saqlain. After Atherton's direct hit from extra cover David Shepherd called for the third umpire's adjudication. Latif began to trail soulfully off and had almost reached the pavilion when the green light came on and he returned to the crease. On such close calls are matches won and lost.

Thanks to a superb unbeaten 125 by Knight, who had made 113 on Saturday, England were able to reach 246, the final wicket falling to the last delivery of their quota. It was perhaps 25 runs fewer than it might have been, particularly as Pakistan had opted to do without Mushtaq Ahmed's wrist spin.

Pakistan got off to a flyer with an opening partnership of 93 inside 17 overs between the unrelated Anwars — Saeed, brilliant all summer, and the newly capped Shahid, an opener with an uncomplicated approach.

It looked as if the game could run away from England but the steady Peter Martin removed Shahid for 37 and Saeed for 61 to peg Pakistan back. Lacking Inzamam's power and Salim Malik's flair, their batting had a fragile look. Robert Croft got rid of Aamir Sohail and Hollioake claimed the wickets of Shadab Khabir, Asif Mujtaba and Wasim Akram in quick succession.

All the time, though, Ijaz Ahmed, Pakistan's Man of the Series, had kept things ticking over and, by the time he drilled Darren Gough to Graham Lloyd on the extra cover boundary, he had made 59 and taken his side to within striking distance of victory.

England 246 (Knight 125 not out, Akram 3-45, Younis 2-49);
Pakistan 247 for 8 (Saeed Anwar 61, I Ahmed 59, Hollioake 4-45).
Pakistan won by two wickets.
England won series 2-1

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Boardman on fast track

RECORDS tumbled like ninepins in the World Track Championships at the National Cycling Centre in Manchester last week. Chris Boardman, Britain's 1992 Olympic champion, set the pace by producing a dazzling display in the opening heat of the 4,000 metres pursuit. He smashed the world record, set by Italian Andrea Collinelli at the Atlanta Olympics, by over six seconds when he clocked 4 minutes 13.353 seconds on his way to victory over Germany's Jens Lehman.

The 28-year-old Briton then defeated Collinelli in a final full of high drama. Boardman got off to a slow start before adopting the "Superman" position invented by Scotland's Graeme Obree to overwhelm the Italian. Boardman went ahead with four laps to go and stayed ahead to finish the course in 4 minutes 11.114 seconds — lopping two seconds off his own record.

Boardman has now extended Britain's hold in the pursuit to four years as he regained the title he won in 1994. Obree had won on the two other occasions.

Another record was shattered in the women's 3,000m. In qualifying, Antonella Bellutti, of Italy, reduced the mark to 3 minutes 31.526 seconds after Lucy Tyler-Sharman of Australia and Marion Clignet of France had already beaten the old record. Clignet beat Tyler-Sharman in the final of the women's 3,000m pursuit.

The Italian team broke the world record for the 4km team pursuit by clocking 4 minutes 00.958 seconds when they beat Russia in the semi-finals. They then went on to win the final in 4 minutes 02.752 seconds.


Pursuit of excellence . . . Chris Boardman on his way to a new record at the World Track Championships in Manchester PHOTOGRAPH: MAX NASH

IT WAS sweet revenge for British tennis star Tim Henman when he beat Todd Martin, the man who had knocked him out at Wimbledon, 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 in the third round of the US Open in New York on Sunday. It is the first time that Henman has reached the fourth round of a Grand Slam tournament without dropping a set. He was due to meet Sweden's Stefan Edberg, in his last US Open, for a place in the quarter-finals. Also through to the fourth round were Goran Ivanisevic and defending champion Pete Sampras.

FRANK BRUNO is hanging up his boxing gloves on doctor's orders. The 34-year-old, who enjoyed a brief spell as world heavyweight champion, decided to retire from the ring after being advised by a specialist that further blows could detach the retina of his right eye, and that he would thus be denied a licence to box.

In his professional career Bruno notched up 40 wins in 45 fights, 38 by knock-out. "I dreamed of winning another world title for Britain," he said, "but my eyesight has to be more important than my dreams."

NASEEM HAMED successfully defended his WBO featherweight title in Dublin, but not before his boxing credentials were put to a severe test by Manuel Medina. The Mexican, stopped inside the distance in only two of his 59 fights, caused Hamed tremendous problems with his skill and sharp punching, but the Briton's firepower triumphed in the end when the referee intervened before the start of the 12th and final round.

SOUTH AFRICA beat New Zealand 32-22 in the third and final rugby Test in Johannesburg, avoiding a whitewash by the tourists. While the All Blacks may have lost some of the shine off their highly successful tour, they return home after becoming the first New Zealand team to win a series in South Africa.

MAKING his mark on the English cricket scene last week was Botham Mark 2. Ian's 19-year-old son, Liam, entered the family business — first class cricket — by taking a startling five for 67 for Hampshire against Middlesex at Portsmouth. The teenager even upstaged his father by taking the wicket of former England captain, Mike Gatting, something his father never managed in his cricketing career.

GLAMORGAN have signed the Pakistan pace bowler Waqar Younis for two years in a deal reported to be around £200,000. Younis, formerly of Surrey, said: "Glamorgan seem a very ambitious club with some very good players and with a clear idea of how I would fit into their plans." Matthew Maynard, Glamorgan's captain, said: "This is possibly the best signing the county have ever made."

THE curtain may only just have risen on this season's Premiership but it is a safe bet that Sheffield Wednesday wouldn't mind stopping the show right now. A hard-won victory over Leicester City on Monday left the South Yorkshire side five points clear of their rivals, striker Richie Humphreys having scored in three of his side's opening four fixtures.

ONLY five months before he is due to appear in court on charges of match-rigging, 38-year-old goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar has been appointed manager of the Zimbabwean national team.